

# **Political Generals in Irregular War: A Necessary Evil or Just Plain Evil**

**A Monograph  
by  
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## Introduction

War is ... a continuation of policy by other means.  
—Carl von Clausewitz<sup>1</sup>

A state is a human community that (successfully) claims the monopoly of the legitimate use of physical force within a given territory.  
—Max Weber<sup>2</sup>

Civilian control in the objective sense is the maximizing of military professionalism.  
—Samuel Huntington<sup>3</sup>

In September 2007, the Commander of Multinational Forces Iraq and the U.S. Ambassador to Iraq (General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker, respectively) testified before a joint hearing of the House Armed Services Committee and the House Foreign Relations Committee to provide their estimates of the state of the war in Iraq. The American media scrutinized their statements because the war in Iraq had become a hotly contested political issue in the ongoing U.S. Presidential race. Television, print, and online media flooded the American people with images and transcripts of the testimony. Various political groups opposed the U.S. strategy for Iraq, leading one organization to place a full-page advertisement in the *New York Times* on the day of the hearing in an effort to discredit General Petraeus.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *War, Politics, and Power: Selections from on War, and I Believe and Profess*, ed. Edward M. Collins (Washington, D.C.: Gateway, 1988), 83.

<sup>2</sup> Max Weber, "Politics as Vocation," in *Essential Readings in Comparative Politics*, ed. Patrick H. O'Neil and Ronald Rogowski, Second ed. (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006), 82.

<sup>3</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1957), 83.

<sup>4</sup> Jake Tapper, "MoveOn.Org Ad Takes Aim at Petraeus," ABCNews.com, <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/Decision2008/story?id=3581727&page=1&page=1> (accessed November 5, 2009).

Despite this complex political minefield, General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker delivered their testimony with clarity and precision. Their appearance before Congress presented the public an image of a harmonized national strategy for the conflict in Iraq, with both the Department of Defense and the Department of State working together on the problem. Despite this perceived cooperation, the implications of the Petraeus-Crocker performance on September 10, 2007 remain ambiguous. While General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker delivered their testimony jointly, General Petraeus became the public figure most associated with U.S. policy for Iraq. Despite the fact that General Petraeus was the operational commander and not the ultimate arbiter of policy, he became a dominant voice in the public debate between the executive branch, the legislative branch, and the American public. He was no longer just a senior military officer providing his best objective professional military advice. General Petraeus had been elevated into a new role as an actor central to the national policy process.

Ultimately, the Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates rewarded General Petraeus for his performance as the commander of all U.S. and coalition forces in Iraq with an appointment as the Commander of U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM). General Petraeus's performance garnered him this position of greater power inside the military and generated numerous accolades in the broader public arena - such as being listed as a respected and influential leader by multiple American magazines.<sup>5</sup> Journalists and pundits frequently credit General Petraeus with designing the U.S. military's new counterinsurgency doctrine and with having single-handedly rejuvenated the U.S. military in Iraq, although critics have accused the media of "overhyping" the General.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> United States Central Command, "US CENTCOM Leadership," United States Central Command, <http://www.centcom.mil/en/about-centcom/leadership/> (accessed November 13, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> Andrew Bacevich, "Army of One: The Overhyping of David Petraeus," The New Republic, <http://www.tnr.com/article/army-one> (accessed February 8, 2010).

General Petraeus's prominence during the Iraq policy debate of 2007 presents several troubling contradictions that warrant examination. These contradictions are the impetus behind this study. First, media reporting indicates that General Petraeus wielded significant influence over the policy for Iraq. However, this apparent influence is in stark contrast to the military's internal criticism of senior general officers involved in policy formation earlier in the war in Iraq. Several authors criticized general officers for not influencing U.S. policy during initial planning for the war in Iraq and compared the current general officer corps to the leaders responsible for mistakes made in the Vietnam War.<sup>7</sup> Regardless, General Petraeus appears to have successfully exerted influence over U.S. policy by virtue of his political skill and careful use of the media.<sup>8</sup>

Further complicating the situation, the American tradition of civilian control over the military implores military officers to remain apolitical as a matter of professional military ethics. General Petraeus's case reveals that there may be competing requirements placed on operational commanders. General Petraeus' rise followed a period of distinctly fragile civil-military relations when the civilian overseers of the military had sought increased control. The apparent harmony between General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker contrasts with the discordant relations that characterized American civil-military relations during the U.S.'s stabilization effort in Iraq during 2003 and 2004. At that time, there was obvious conflict between the civilian and military leadership responsible for the war. Numerous biographies, scholarly works, and journalistic

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<sup>7</sup> Frank G. Hoffman, "Dereliction of Duty Redux" (Washington, D.C., Foreign Policy Research Institute, October 15, 2007). Paul Yingling, "A Failure in Generalship," *Armed Forces Journal*, May, 2007, 16-23, <http://www.armedforcesjournal.com/2007/05/2635198> (accessed April 2, 2009).

<sup>8</sup> Framing the civil-military relations dilemma with a vignette of General Petraeus is not an attempt to make a normative judgment on General Petraeus's ethics or performance, but rather an apropos lead-in to the potential challenges that irregular warfare presents to civil-military relations and professional military ethics.

accounts identify that civil-military relations were, at best, fractious during this period.<sup>9</sup> That period culminated with numerous firings and early transitions for senior civilian and military leaders, including the operational commander in Iraq, the head of the Coalition Provisional Authority, and (later) the forced resignation of the Secretary of Defense. Consequently, General Petraeus's prominence in national affairs was a startling change from a period when the military's civilian overseers were intent on establishing greater control over the military.<sup>10</sup>

General Petraeus's prominence raises questions for American civil-military relations that remain unanswered. General Petraeus emerged during the national debate to determine the U.S. objectives in Iraq and the resources that the nation was willing to expend to reach them. In 2009, a similar debate emerged over the U.S. strategy in Afghanistan. The U.S.'s operational commander, General Stanley A. McChrystal, presented several options for a change in strategy to defeat the Taliban insurgency. General McChrystal suffered media criticism for having made his request too public (thus putting political pressure on President Barack H. Obama).<sup>11</sup> Unlike the situation surrounding General Petraeus's rise, the Obama administration appeared reluctant to grant an operational commander the degree of political influence previously wielded by General

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<sup>9</sup> The civil-military friction of this period created a renewed interest in civil-military relations. Numerous articles, scholarly works, and autobiographies attempt to identify and explain the problem. Political scientist Michael Desch framed the problem like many and blamed Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. Michael C. Desch, "Bush and the Generals," *Foreign Affairs*, no. May/June (2007), <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/62616/michael-c-desch/bush-and-the-generals> (accessed March 22, 2009). Dale Herspring's analysis of civil-military relations under President George W. Bush details the friction between the Secretary of Defense and senior General Officers and is perhaps the best scholarly work on the period. Dale R. Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency: Civil-Military Relations from FDR to George W. Bush* (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2005).

<sup>10</sup> Dana Priest, *The Mission: Waging War and Keeping Peace with America's Military* (New York: Norton, 2003), 24.

<sup>11</sup> Bruce Ackerman, "Generals Shouldn't Disagree Publicly with the Commander in Chief," *The Washington Post*, October 3, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/02/AR2009100203939.html> (accessed March 20, 2010).



Petraeus – despite the fact that President Obama appointed General McChrystal for having a warrior-diplomat skill set similar to General Petraeus’s own. “These days, the last thing that the White House and the Pentagon brass want is a general who can bypass the chain of command; a general who speaks directly to the president; a general who emerges as the dominant American voice on the war. The last thing they want, in other words, is another Petraeus.”<sup>12</sup>

## Research Question

The subject of this research is operational leadership in contemporary conflict. Irregular warfare is the dominant mode of war today and the Department of Defense expects irregular warfare to be the most likely form of future conflict or a likely component of future conflict. The Secretary of Defense recently directed that the U.S. armed forces become as capable at irregular warfare as they are at traditional warfare.<sup>13</sup> The Department of Defense defines irregular warfare as a “violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s). Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capacities, in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will.”<sup>14</sup>

Irregular wars generate significant debate over appropriate strategy and resource allocation, a function of the relative complexity and ambiguity of irregular wars. Consequently, military actions in irregular wars have greater political ramifications, a potential challenge to the

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<sup>12</sup> Greg Jaffe, "Obama Wanted a Petraeus. Buyer Beware," *Washington Post*, November 13, 2009, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/10/09/AR2009100902568.html> (accessed November 13, 2009).

<sup>13</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Department of Defense Directive 3000.07, December 1, 2008* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2008).

<sup>14</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1-02: Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2008), 282.

traditional view of how the U.S.'s civilian leadership maintains control of the military. Military influence in the political domain may contradict traditional notions of impartial military professionalism and civil control of the military. Currently military doctrine for planning and operations artificially separates strategy and policy formation from operations (military implementation), a reflection of the military's own preference for separate spheres of authority for policy and the military. These preferences contrast with the nature of policy formulation in the American political system. In reality, the policy process is pluralistic and characterized by continuous interaction between many different actors including senior military leaders. Consequently, irregular warfare may affect the norms for military participation in policy formulation as well as civil-military relations.

This discussion frames an apparent dilemma between the leadership requirements imposed by irregular warfare, the reality of strategy formation in the U.S. system, and constraints imposed by military ethics and norms for civil-military relations. This study seeks to answer the conceptual research question, in what ways do operational commanders exert political influence on the policy process in the context of irregular warfare? There are two possible approaches to this topic. First, there is the normative question about whether operational commanders should get involved in the policy process. Second, there is a predictive question about the conditions leading to an operational commander's involvement in the policy process. This monograph focuses on the role of operational commanders in the policy process, not whether commanders should be involved in politics. Overall, this monograph contributes to the body of knowledge on civil-military relations, professional military ethics, and irregular warfare.

## **Hypothesis**

Operational commanders in the context of irregular wars will engage in the policy formulation process by acting to gain influence over the overall strategy and the resources available for their operations. Operational commanders are responsible for achieving operational

objectives that support the national strategic interest. However, national strategic objectives are transient and ambiguous in irregular wars and irregular wars are resource intensive.

Consequently, operational commanders must gain entry to the policy process both to add clarity to the strategy they support with military operations, and to gather the resources necessary to complete the task. This extension of influence beyond the strictly military domain represents a relative increase in influence or power for military operational commanders. This change is inherently political and controversial.

This monograph argues that the operational commander's role is defined by his participation in the policy process (at the systems level of analysis), rather than by the prescriptive constraints of civil-military relations or ethics (individual level factors). Gaining entry into the policy process is the essence or function of "political generalship" in contemporary conflict. By gaining entry into this system, operational commanders achieve influence to clarify their command's responsibilities and to gather resources. In short, it is the context (irregular warfare) and the system (a political process) that determines why and how operational commanders engage in the policy process.

## **Scope and Limitations of this Study**

Although the research question posed here has far-reaching implications, this monograph is limited in application and scope. First, the United States has a unique democratic political system and a distinctly American military tradition. This monograph is primarily concerned with civil-military relations in the United States. There are numerous forms of democracy and the American political system is not a generic form. The ideas in this monograph are limited in application to the U.S. political system. Second, this monograph focuses on contemporary conflict. The national security structure of the United States has evolved significantly over time. From the National Security Act of 1947 to the era of joint operations ushered in by the Goldwater-Nichols Act (1986), the country's civilian national security structures and military

structures have evolved.<sup>15</sup> Historical comparisons provide perspective and comparison, but this monograph relies upon these older cases only on a limited basis because conditions have changed substantially enough that historical comparison and analysis may be inadequate.

Third, this monograph explores contemporary American civil-military relations in irregular warfare. This research relies upon the assumption that irregular warfare is and will continue to be a valid and relevant operational construct for U.S. armed forces. Irregular warfare will be a component of future wars, if not the dominant mode of conflict altogether. This assumption means that the services will continue to develop doctrine and capabilities to operate in irregular conflicts. The U.S. military is currently actively involved in irregular wars in Iraq, Afghanistan, the Philippines, and elsewhere. In the aftermath of the last period of significant U.S. involvement in irregular warfare (e.g., the Vietnam conflict), the U.S. military systematically shed its concepts and capabilities for irregular wars.<sup>16</sup> In contrast, this monograph anticipates that the U.S. military will continue to place importance on irregular warfare and will organize accordingly. Without this assumption, this study would be neither relevant nor necessary.

Finally, this research depends upon the idea that the armed services will actually employ irregular warfare-specific strategies in the conduct of future irregular wars when it is in the national interest to employ U.S. military forces in irregular conflicts. There is certainly the possibility that the country will choose to avoid involvement in irregular conflicts or that the country will choose non-military strategies to address future irregular conflicts. Even if the

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<sup>15</sup> Specifically, under our contemporary/current structure, Combatant Commanders report to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) and the President. Operational leadership is inherently joint and in close proximity to the strategic apex of political power in the U.S. This is a narrow barrier between political decision-making and military operations.

<sup>16</sup> See Andrew F. Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1988).

military trains and organizes to conduct irregular warfare, the capability may not be the option of choice for the national leadership. In this case, without the military in the future irregular war problem, there would be no civil-military relationship to manage.

## The Persistent Myth of an Apolitical Military Domain

The study of civil-military relations has suffered from too little theorizing.  
— Samuel Huntington<sup>17</sup>

All warfare is about politics. It is only the political dimension that gives meaning to the bloody activity.  
— Colin Gray<sup>18</sup>

This study is concerned with several related subjects: irregular warfare and contemporary conflict, civil-military relations, professional military ethics, and plural decision-making. This background section demonstrates that there is no clear barrier to an operational commander's involvement in politics. While many observers of civil-military relations naively assume that the military is apolitical, this section establishes that just as strategy and operations are interrelated, politics and the military are interrelated. The literature review demonstrates that the literature for civil-military relations fails to account for and explain interaction between the military and civilian policy makers under conditions of strategic ambiguity, a key attribute of irregular warfare. Together, these ideas form the premise for this monograph; that a thin blurry line separates politics from military operations. This premise amounts to heretical thought in a military context, because it rejects the military's own cultural imperative to remain apolitical.

This section utilizes recent scholarly works and military publications to provide a basis for analyzing the problem of the military's involvement in politics by challenging the traditional notion of an apolitical operational military. First, doctrine presupposes an artificial separation of

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<sup>17</sup> Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, vii.

<sup>18</sup> Colin S. Gray, "Irregular Warfare: One Nature, Many Characters," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* Winter (2007), 44.

operations from strategy. Similarly, the American tradition for civilian control of the military presupposes an apolitical military domain, supported by a unique system of professional military ethics that restrains the military to this independent domain. This analysis will show that there is no independent and apolitical military domain, a fact with significant implications for operational level commanders. Finally, contemporary conflict is irregular in nature and conflates the lanes of authority between the military and non-military entities. This background section will demonstrate that military doctrine and professional ethics fail to establish a constraint on military involvement in policy formulation and that contemporary conflict places functional demands on the military to engage in the policy process. In short, at the operational level of war there is no independent/apolitical military domain governed by professional ethics.

## **The Relationship Between Strategy and Operations**

Current U.S. military doctrine identifies three levels of war (strategic, operational, and tactical).<sup>19</sup> The doctrine introduces confusion by differentiating the strategic level of war from the operational level of war while also acknowledging that there are “no finite limits or boundaries between them.”<sup>20</sup> The doctrine describes an idealized top-down process of policy formulation in which the President and Secretary of Defense establish strategic objectives with the advice of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The regional combatant commanders then establish supporting theater strategic plans, and finally operational commanders “use operational art...to achieve operational and strategic objectives.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-0: Joint Operations*, Change 1, February 13, 2008 ed. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2008), II-1.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., II-1.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., II-1,2.

U.S. military doctrine is an internally consistent logic because the military systematically develops doctrine as a logically consistent set of publications, such that each topic or publication is consistent with the doctrine as a whole. The joint doctrine for operations is a foundational document for the military and the logic contained in it propagates out through the rest of the military's literature.<sup>22</sup> For example, the joint doctrine for planning presents strategy formulation as an activity associated with specific actors and distinct from operational planning. Together, the doctrine presents strategy, operations, and tactics as distinct elements in a hierarchy by dividing responsibilities/authorities, planning processes, and capabilities/forces between distinct levels of war.

The hierarchical view of war prevalent in doctrine is an erroneous departure from the theoretical origins of operational art. In "Alien: How Operational Art Devoured Strategy," Justin Kelly and Michael Brennan detail the U.S. military doctrine's deviation from its theoretical foundation.<sup>23</sup> Operational art evolved from the necessity to link tactics to strategy on complex battlefields. "Any attempt in theory to insulate the practical conduct of war from this volatility is erroneous."<sup>24</sup> Because tactics involved continuous interaction (violent competition) between actors, strategy could not remain static. Consequently, operational art evolved as the system

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<sup>22</sup> To this end, the United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) is the Department of Defense's proponent for development of joint forces doctrine. USJFCOM employs a collaborative system to develop and produce individual publications that together constitute a cohesive doctrine for employment of military forces. A description of this is provided by: David A. Sawyer, "The Joint Doctrine Development System," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 1996-1997, no. Winter (1996), 36-39.

<sup>23</sup> Justin Kelly and Michael J. Brennan, "The Leavenworth Heresy and Perversion of Operational Art," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 56, 1st Quarter (2010), 114, [http://www.ndu.edu/press/jfq\\_pages/i56.htm](http://www.ndu.edu/press/jfq_pages/i56.htm) (accessed February 8, 2010).

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.



(ways) linking the continuum from strategy (ends) to tactics (means).<sup>25</sup> Kelly and Brennan demonstrate convincingly that U.S. doctrine has mistakenly separated political factors from the level of operational war and, in part, attribute this artificial separation to the military's own preference for separate domains of authority for military and political decision makers.<sup>26</sup>

This maligning definition of operational art began with the revision of U.S. Army doctrine in the early 1980s, but the separation of strategy from operations is evident in subsequent revisions of both U.S. Army service and joint service doctrine. Following the change in doctrine, formal structure and authorities inside the Department of Defense changed dramatically with the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. This act significantly improved the joint war fighting capabilities of the U.S. military, but created a structural separation from operational commanders and strategic decision makers. The key impacts of Goldwater-Nichols include reduction of the service chiefs' direct authority over operations, formalization of the role of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff as the Secretary of Defense's principal military advisor, and elevation of the authority of combatant commanders to include both control of theater strategy and conduct of operations.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Justin Kelly and Michael J. Brennan, *Alien: How Operational Art Devoured Strategy* (Carlisle, PA: United States Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2009), 8-9.

<sup>26</sup> Kelly and Brennan, *The Leavenworth Heresy and Perversion of Operational Art*, 114.

<sup>27</sup> Multiple sources describe both the intentions and consequences of the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986. A good synopsis was authored by James R. Locher, a Congressional staffer involved in the development of Goldwater-Nichols. James R. III Locher, "Taking Stock of Goldwater-Nichols," *Joint Force Quarterly : JFQ*, Autumn (1996), 9 - 17, [http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq\\_pubs/0513.pdf](http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/jel/jfq_pubs/0513.pdf) (accessed February 25, 2010). An additional account of the Act's impact on civil control is found here: Brandon L. Dewind, *Civil-Military Relations: From Vietnam to Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: U.S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies, 2009), 13-17.

One author involved in the development of the Goldwater-Nichols Act argued later that the Act enhanced civilian control of the military by clarifying the chain of command.<sup>28</sup> Although this change in structure clarified the military command and enabled top-down promulgation of strategy, the elevation of combatant commanders to a strategic role places a real barrier between operational commanders and strategic policy makers by embedding operational commanders inside combatant commands. If strategy is dependent on operations (which, in turn depends on tactical conditions), then it is not clear that further separating operational commanders from strategic decision makers actually achieves greater civilian control over the use of military power. For example, the joint doctrine for operations asserts that combatant commanders have a strategic role as the vital link between those who “determine national security policy and strategy and the military forces or subordinate [joint force commanders] that conduct military operations.”<sup>29</sup> Furthermore, combatant commanders “plan at the national and theater strategic levels of war” to “guide joint operation planning at the operational level.”<sup>30</sup> In short, the combination of doctrine and structural reform constrain operational commanders to a single official (formal) mechanism or channel to strategic decision makers and that channel is through the combatant commander.

Although the doctrine clearly delineates the roles and authority of operational commanders, the leadership doctrine introduces ambiguity by imploring senior leaders at strategic and operational levels to extend their influence beyond their formal authorities. The U.S. Army’s latest revision of Field Manual 6-22 (Leadership), acknowledges that senior leaders operate in a distinct environment, a euphemism for a political environment in which authorities are

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<sup>28</sup> Locher, *Taking Stock of Goldwater-Nichols*, 12.

<sup>29</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-0: Joint Operations*, I-3.

<sup>30</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 5-0: Joint Operations Planning*, 26 December 2006 ed. (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2006), I-9.

ambiguous.<sup>31</sup> The U.S. Army's solution is "extension of influence beyond the chain of command" through a combination of "persuasion, empowerment, motivation, negotiation, conflict resolution, bargaining, advocacy, and diplomacy."<sup>32</sup> The U.S. Army advocates these means for influence of actors such as inter-agency, foreign military, and host nation partners. Specifically, the leadership manual speaks to building consensus in the joint, inter-agency, and multinational context.<sup>33</sup> Clearly, this leadership doctrine urges leaders (including operational commanders) to influence actors and activities beyond their authority, which for operational commanders would include actors involved in strategic decision-making beyond their direct communications with a combatant commander.

There are several key implications from current doctrine and associated structure. First, our doctrine prescribes an idealized view of war with operations separate from strategy. The doctrine does make a limited acknowledgement of the necessity of interaction between actors at different levels, but even the definition of operational art implies the separation of operational from strategic activities.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, structure isolates operational commanders below combatant commanders operating at the strategic level while also restraining operational commanders to a single official conduit for strategy. Second, the doctrine fails to address (predict) how commanders of operations actually interact with the actors charged with strategy formulation.

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<sup>31</sup> Joint doctrine consists of multi-service publications as well as service-specific publications. There is no multi-service leadership publication and the Army's doctrine is taken as exemplary of the approach advocated by the military services. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 6-22: Army Leadership* (2006), 12-1.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 11-2.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 12-5.

<sup>34</sup> The military defines operational art as "the employment of military forces to attain strategic objectives through design, organization, integration, and conduct of strategies, campaigns, major operations, and battles." United States Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 5-0: Joint Operations Planning*, I-9.

Lastly, the restraints of doctrine and structure are at odds with the leadership imperative to extend influence beyond the chain of command. These points relate to civilian control of the military and the conditions of irregular warfare, the next two topics.

## **The Relationship Between the Military and Politics**

Scholars of civil-military relations are ultimately trying to find an answer to the paradox of armed forces in society: a military is necessary for state security, but the existence of a military can threaten state security. Political scientist Peter Feaver describes this ancient problem of organized human society as the “civil-military *problematique*.<sup>35</sup>” Civil-military relations theories attempt to explain how states resolve the security paradox to achieve optimal security, and in doing so they also offer answers to the question of the military’s role in politics. In the United States, the Constitution answers the security paradox in part by prescribing civilian control over the military. Article II designates the President as the Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces and Article I gives the legislature control over the military’s resource base, a measure that imposes a distribution of power among national actors and (thereby) formalizes the U.S.’s plural decision-making process for national security. The Constitution provides the legal basis for subordination of the military to the control of the country’s elected civilian leadership, but leaves unanswered the question of how best to impose civilian control. The essence of the question of civilian control is the sharing of authority and responsibility for military strategy between civilian political leadership and the U.S. military.

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<sup>35</sup> Peter D. Feaver, "The Civil-Military Problematique: Huntington, Janowitz, and the Question of Civilian Control," *Armed Forces and Society* 23, no. 2 (Winter, 1996), 150.

Today, renowned political scientist Samuel Huntington's objective control theory is widely accepted as the solution to the question of civilian control. In *The Soldier and the State*, Huntington argues for increasing the professionalism of the U.S. military in order to make the military a useful tool of the state.<sup>36</sup> Huntington asserts that professionalization of the military and "objective control" sets "definite limits" on military power in society.<sup>37</sup> Essentially, Huntington forms a tautology by defining a professional military as an apolitical military. He argues that through professionalization the military would focus on their domain of expertise, become apolitical, and occupy an independent sphere separate from, but subject to, civilian political power. This objective control method makes strategy and policy the purview of civilian political leaders and military implementation the exclusive purview of the military. Ideally, "objective control" denies the military a role in the plural decision-making process that sets military strategy, thus clearly restraining operational commanders from any involvement in the policy process. With "objective control," Huntington provides an overly idealistic solution similar to the idealized solution provided in military doctrine. Just as doctrine artificially separates operations from strategy, Huntington attempts to isolate military implementation of policy from the political context.

Most publications in the field of civil-military relations begin with Huntington's theory and *The Soldier and the State* is widely considered essential reading for military officers. His ideas are the foundation for almost all dialogue on the nature of civil-military relations in America. Huntington's theory has been subject to critique for over sixty years and while much of this criticism is valid, there are only a few points apropos to this analysis of the relationship

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<sup>36</sup> Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 83.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 84.

between strategy and operations in contemporary conflict. First, Huntington assumes that it is possible through military professionalism to create a “clearly delineated military sphere defined by war fighting that is independent of the social and political sphere.”<sup>38</sup> This is an idealized separation of the military from politics, but even if it were possible, Huntington fails to account for forms of military professionalism that do not render the military politically neutral. Any amount of political activity by “professionalized” military officers would be sufficient to disprove Huntington’s proposition. Steve Corbett and Michael Davidson prove this point by arguing that despite valuing “political neutrality” as an ideal, the military is not “politically neutral” in practice.<sup>39</sup> Historian Dale Herspring has even dismissed Huntington’s normative prescription for an apolitical military as “an illusion.”<sup>40</sup>

Second, Huntington only describes civilian military relations under the conditions of imposed objective control. He does not start from a general description of how all of the many actors relate to decide matters of national security and employment of the military. Instead, he begins with the imposition of objective control through professionalization of the military. Consequently, he prescribes his objective control thesis as a solution to the civil control problem without really stating a theory that describes how the system of civil-military relations

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<sup>38</sup> James Burk, "Theories of Democratic Civil-Military Relations," *Armed Forces and Society* 29 (2002), 13.

<sup>39</sup> Steve Corbett and Michael J. Davidson, "The Role of the Military in Presidential Politics," *Parameters* 39, no. 4 (Winter, 2009), 63-64, <http://lumen.cgsccarl.com/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com/lumen.cgsccarl.com/pqdweb?did=1986259201&Fmt=7&clientId=5094&RQT=309&VName=PQD> (accessed April 13, 2010).

<sup>40</sup> Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency: Civil-Military Relations from FDR to George W. Bush*, 7.

functions.<sup>41</sup> Huntington is able to achieve this by reducing the complexity of civil-military relations to a simple system consisting of military elites (senior military officers) and the civilian policymakers with formal (hierarchical) authority over the military. Civil-military relations involve much greater complexity with dynamic relationships between many different groups.

A counterpoint to Huntington's normative theory is the parsimonious theory of war provided by Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz, which defines war as a "continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means."<sup>42</sup> Clausewitz argues that political objectives determine how force is employed and what resources are committed to the effort.<sup>43</sup> To illuminate his theory, Clausewitz describes the "paradoxical trinity," a powerful, yet simple heuristic to explain the relationship between the state, the Army, and the people.<sup>44</sup> Clausewitz asserts the state determines objectives in war, that the military provides ways, and that the people provide the means. This theory reduces a complex system to three actors, but the theory has advantages over Huntington's formulation. Clausewitz accounts for the actors, the interactions between political objectives (strategy) and military implementation (operations). However, Clausewitz refrains from artificially prescribing how the actors connect (or in Huntington's case, disconnect) strategy with operations.

Clausewitz' ideas constitute a powerful theory of civil-military relations. Clausewitz studied and wrote about war in attempt to understand war as he had experienced it during the

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<sup>41</sup> This simplification is analogous to the modernist (or rational school) of organization theory, which ignores internal functions and politics in organizations. Mary Jo Hatch and Ann L. Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press: Modern, Symbolic, and Postmodern Perspectives, 2006), 253.

<sup>42</sup> Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*: Oxford University Press, 2000), 28.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., 30.

Napoleonic era. This is profound because his theory is an attempt to describe war in reality – rather than attempt to prescribe an ideal form.<sup>45</sup> However, unlike contemporary theorists, Clausewitz does not offer a normative solution for how states or political leaders best control the use of military power; he only asserts that politics and the employment of force (operations) are interrelated and that political influence on war is continuous.<sup>46</sup>

This comparison of Clausewitz' and Huntington's ideas is useful to reveal the real shortcomings of Huntington's theory. Similarly, other contemporary civil-military relations theorists offer equally limited structural or actor-specific theories. Structural theories identify how the composition and authority of political and military organizations affect civil control of the military. These are broad all-encompassing theories that rely on gross simplification to explain these large social systems. An example of this approach is Peter Feaver's application of agency theory. Feaver reduces civil-military relations to an interaction between two actors (the state and the military) and examines how the military (as agent) responds to the direction or control of the principal (the state).<sup>47</sup> Contemporary theories either reduce systems by describing whole organizations as single actors or focus narrowly on key actors, such as the President or select senior military officers. Eliot Cohen's "unequal dialogue" theory uses this approach to show how Presidents exert control over their military chiefs.<sup>48</sup> Cohen argues that civilian policymakers make the final decisions on the use of military power and that effective use of the military

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<sup>45</sup> Alan D. Beyerchen, "Clausewitz, Nonlinearity and the Unpredictability of War," *International Security* 17, no. 3 (1992), 59-90, <http://www.clausewitz.com/readings/Beyerchen/CWZandNonlinearity.htm> (accessed February 25, 2010).

<sup>46</sup> Suzanne C. Nielsen, *Political Control Over the use of Force: A Clausewitzian Perspective* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2001), 14.

<sup>47</sup> Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005).

<sup>48</sup> Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command* (New York: Free Press, 2002).



requires skilled civilian leaders who selectively intervene into military affairs. Cohen's theory apparently gained significant attention among civilian policy makers and some critics have attributed recent trends in civil-military relations to Cohen's ideas.<sup>49</sup>

It is beyond the scope of this monograph to address the entire body of civil-military relations theory, but it suffices to state that there is no unifying theory of civil-military relations that explains how interaction occurs between the many actors involved.<sup>50</sup> The existing theories are predominantly normative in nature, prescribing solutions to the problem of control from the perspective of civilian policymakers.<sup>51</sup> Interestingly, both Feaver and Cohen rely on limiting assumptions that potentially introduce the same flaws as Huntington. Feaver's principal-agent theory rests on the notion the military accepts civilian supremacy in their interaction, and that the task for the civilian principal is to gain the client's full compliance for direction, assuming that the civilian leadership decides policy and dictates it to the military.<sup>52</sup> Cohen takes this a step further, recommending an intrusive leadership style for civilians to ensure that military operations adequately support the civilian-inspired strategy. These prominent theories have had less influence than Huntington's theory for a variety of reasons, but they still rely on an artificial notion that strategy is decided by civilians and that the military is absent from the policy process

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<sup>49</sup> Desch, *Bush and the Generals*.

<sup>50</sup> This assertion is echoed in many other more thorough reviews of the civil-military relations literature, such as: Burk, *Theories of Democratic Civil-Military Relations*, 7.

<sup>51</sup> The theoretical shortcoming is the failure to address the nature of interaction in civil-military relations and to explain how the civil-military relations functions prior to prescribing a solution to the control problem. This sentiment is shared by several authors. Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency: Civil-Military Relations from FDR to George W. Bush*, 2. Feaver, *The Civil-Military Problematic: Huntington, Janowitz, and the Question of Civilian Control*, 149.

<sup>52</sup> Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency: Civil-Military Relations from FDR to George W. Bush*, 10.

(apolitical). Most importantly, these theories have less predictive power because they combine reductionism with limiting assumptions.

This literature review began with an analysis of current military doctrine and concluded that doctrine relied upon an idealized view of hierarchical levels of war. When confronted with the reality of war, doctrine only provides ambiguous solution to the question of the military's role in the policy process. Similarly, Huntington's theory of civil-military relations offers another overly idealistic solution, in this case a pure military domain governed by military professionalism. The utility of Huntington's objective control theory is contingent upon the professionalism of the military. Huntington's theory is only an answer to the question of the military's role in policy formulation to the extent that military adopts an apolitical form of professionalism that respects civil control and accepts an independent military domain. For Huntington's theory to become valid, an independent military domain must exist, the military must effectively adopt the prescribed form of professionalism, and this professionalism must actually serve as a restraint to the military relative to political processes.

## **Professional Military Ethics**

The U.S. military has effectively adopted Huntington's concept of objective control as the ideal or norm for American civil-military relations. The idea of a professional military serving the nation complements the American way of war: civilians decide to employ American military forces based on clear objectives for military power. The American military prefers rapid decisive operations and application of technology.<sup>53</sup> Professionalization supports this way of war.

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 15-16.

Consequently, the U.S. military has inculcated Huntington's objective control model as an ideal form of civil control of the military.<sup>54</sup>

Huntington's theory remains relevant precisely because the U.S. military has adopted military professionalism and separate spheres as the preferred state of civil-military relations. The review of doctrine and the identification of an artificial separation of the levels of war already revealed the extent to which the separate spheres concept has invaded military thinking. This is not an academically trivial observation, because a flawed foundation makes doctrine a weak and ambiguous guide to the operational commander's role in policy formation. Next, this review examined civil-military relations theory, which presents military professionalism as one answer to the question of the commander's role (Huntington's "objective control"). This theory pervades the professional military ethics literature. Huntington offers that professionalism creates an independent military domain and is the best method to achieve civil control. While this theory rests on dubious assumptions (that a military domain independent from society is possible), this prescription is only valid if the military's ethics actually reflect Huntington's apolitical professionalism and if these ethics actually restrain military activity to the "apolitical" military domain.

Fortunately, the military's deference to civilian authority pre-dates Huntington. Consider that George Washington went to great lengths to ensure the military's compliance with civilian

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<sup>54</sup> See Larry Diamond's discussion on the growing acceptance of objective control of the military. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, "Introduction," in *Civil-Military Relations and Democracy*, ed. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner (Baltimore, Maryland: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996), xii. Other authors argue that Huntington's objective control model has become the "normal theory of civil-military relations." See Mackubin Thomas Owens, "Rumsfeld, the Generals, and the State of U.S. Civil-Military Relations," *Naval War College Review* 59, no. 4 (Autumn, 2006), 71.

rule during the American Revolution.<sup>55</sup> Today, the oath of office formalizes this ethic and binds military members to support of the Commander in Chief and the Constitution.<sup>56</sup> While adhering to an externally imposed legal obligation is important, the essence of professionalism is that collective members establish clear standards for conduct and self regulate. The U.S. military has no formal code of ethics, a fact that led to the U.S. Army's formation of a new center for professional military ethics at the United States Military Academy in 2007.<sup>57</sup> The absence of a clear and well-promulgated code of ethics clearly conflicts with the essential function of professionalism, to maintain the effectiveness of the profession for society. "Professions create their own standards of performance and codes of ethics to maintain their effectiveness."<sup>58</sup> In the absence of a Department of Defense ethical code, military ethics are effectively a socially constructed informal guide to conduct.

In a recent analysis of the evolution of the U.S. Army's professional ethic, an author from the U.S. Army War College concludes that the Army's professional ethic "embraced national service, loyalty to the Constitution, *obedience to civilian authority*, mastery of a complex body of doctrinal and technical expertise, positive leadership, and ethical behavior."<sup>59</sup> The author traces the military's respect for civil control to the Constitution, but attributes civil-military tensions in

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<sup>55</sup> This story is cited frequently in the context of civil-military relations. John R. Miller, "George Washington's Tear Jerker," *The New York Times*, February 14, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/15/opinion/15miller.html> (accessed April 1, 2010).

<sup>56</sup> Richard Swain, "Reflection on an Ethic of Officership," *Parameters* 37, no. 1 (Spring, 2007), 8.

<sup>57</sup> Matthew Moten, *The Army Officer's Professional Ethic: Past, Present, and Future* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2010), 1, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=966> (accessed March 4, 2010).

<sup>58</sup> Department of the Army, *Field Manual 1: The Army* (: United States Army, 2005), 1-11, [http://www.army.mil/usapa/doctrine/active\\_fm.html](http://www.army.mil/usapa/doctrine/active_fm.html) (accessed March 6, 2010).

<sup>59</sup> Moten, *The Army Officer's Professional Ethic: Past, Present, and Future*, 14.

the post-2001 era to the absence of a clearly articulated code of ethics that affirms obedience to civilian control and rejects involvement in domestic politics.<sup>60</sup> Ironically, one of the leading scholars in the field of professional military ethics concludes that the political component of the Army ethic is “the least understood today, probably because of the Huntingtonian tradition within the American profession of arms that the military should avoid politics and politicization in order to retain its professionalism.”<sup>61</sup> This criticism is based on the observation that key aspects of the military (composition of forces, employment, and funding) are inherently political and require a dialogue between the military and political institutions. In short, while Huntington’s idea does inform today’s military ethic, this military-internal control mechanism is ambiguous and weak.

The literature on military ethics portrays military service as a unique profession due to the requirements of military service. Today’s military ethics are most concrete or practical at the individual level in the context of tactical combat.<sup>62</sup> This tactical focus is a continuation of old traditions and definitions of the military profession, such as Harold Lasswell’s classic definition of the military profession as the management of violence.<sup>63</sup> Current norms reflect the requirements of the tactical battlefield and are limited in application to the technical-tactical military domain. If we take Huntington’s independent military domain to be the domain controlled by the established system of professional ethics, then any military activity beyond this professionally governed tactical military domain is no longer exclusively military. In short, the

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 17, 20-21.

<sup>61</sup> John Nagl, Don Snider, and Tony Pfaff, *Army Professionalism, the Military Ethic, and Officership in the 21st Century*: United States Army Strategic Studies Institute, 1999), 12.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>63</sup> Lasswell quoted in: Winthrop Hackett, Lieutenant General Sir John, *The Profession of Arms*, Center for Military History Publication 70-18 ed. (Washington, D.C.: United States Army Center for Military History, 1966), 3.

current professional ethic demonstrates that Huntington's idealized military domain is an illusion above the tactical level of war. The military ethic fails to address operational and strategy levels of war precisely because these levels are not purely military. These are different professional contexts requiring a different set of professional norms governed by the actors involved.

Beyond the fact that the current professional norms are limited to tactical military endeavors, military ethics are malleable and respond to a variety of forces including the requirements of ongoing operations. Contemporary conflicts generate requirements on military forces at all levels and the military forces adapt their profession to ensure effectiveness. This catalyst for change, what ethics author Don Snider refers to as a "functional imperative," is particularly germane to this discussion of operational command in contemporary irregular warfare.<sup>64</sup> While addressing an audience of military professionals, Snider criticizes the military's intransigence or inability to adapt to the functional requirements of irregular conflicts.<sup>65</sup> The unique requirements of contemporary conflict, in the absence of a specific professional ethic for operational level command, define the context or domain in which operational command occurs and are the factors that shape norms for operational command – including whether operational commanders stray into the political fray on the current conflict.

## **Irregular Warfare**

Globalization, climate change, rapid technological development and proliferation, and economic instability are among the many factors precipitating today's dangerous international

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<sup>64</sup> Don Snider, Paul Oh, and Kevin Toner, *The Army's Professional Military Ethic in an Era of Persistent Conflict* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, United States Army War College, 2009), 7.

<sup>65</sup> Don Snider and Gayle L. Watkins, "The Future of Army Professionalism: A Need for Renewal and Redefinition," *Parameters*, no. Autumn (2000), 5.

security environment.<sup>66</sup> Almost all of today's theorists foresee a world characterized by enduring conflict and instability. Intra-state conflicts, transnational conflicts with non-state actors, and dangerous wars with rogue states all loom on the horizon. Most importantly, both today's conflicts (such as those in Iraq and Afghanistan) and tomorrow's wars are likely to include irregular components. Some analysts describe "hybrid wars," underscoring the complexity and potential interconnectedness between various threats.<sup>67</sup> Others have argued that distinct forms of war do not exist and contend that all wars are hybrid and include varying degrees of traditional and irregular activities.<sup>68</sup> The implication of all of these perspectives is that irregular wars are here to stay – whether the U.S. is fighting irregular wars in combination with or independent of conventional conflicts.

This newly heightened interest for irregular warfare disguises the fact that this form of war is not new. In his historical analysis of American military history, Army historian Andrew Birtle observes that the U.S. Army has spent the majority of its time performing operations other than conventional warfare. Birtle argues that throughout U.S. history, the military has been continuously engaged in irregular wars.<sup>69</sup> The term "irregular warfare" is only the latest description that replaces a litany of older euphemisms for all conflict other than intra-state war,

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<sup>66</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Joint Operating Environment* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2007).

<sup>67</sup> Many authors address irregular warfare as a component of hybrid warfare. See Frank G. Hoffman, *Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars* (Arlington, VA: The Potomac Institute, 2007), 8-9, [http://www.potomac institute.org/publications/Potomac\\_HybridWar\\_0108.pdf](http://www.potomac institute.org/publications/Potomac_HybridWar_0108.pdf) (accessed April 27, 2009).

<sup>68</sup> Michael C. Horowitz and Dan A. Shalman, "The Future of War and American Strategy," *Orbis*, Spring (2009), 311.

<sup>69</sup> Andrew J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine 1860 - 1941* (Washington, D.C.: United States Army Center of Military History, 2004), 3.

such as low intensity conflict, operations other than war, small war(s), among others.<sup>70</sup> While irregular warfare proponents concede that the term is “poorly named,” the concept is valid and is a driving force in the Department of Defense.<sup>71</sup> The armed forces actively seek to develop doctrine, organize, train, and equip for the realities of irregular warfare. In this sense, irregular warfare profoundly shapes the capability that the military provides to the nation. The American military expects to fight irregular wars in the future and this expectation shapes force structure and training decisions being made today by both military leaders and civilian policymakers.

The United States Department of Defense provides a definition of irregular warfare, found in the joint dictionary of terms as well as in approved doctrine. Irregular warfare is a “violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s). Irregular warfare favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capacities, in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will.”<sup>72</sup>

The first definitive characteristic of irregular warfare is complexity. The military’s definition identifies three critical elements of irregular warfare: the environment, the actors, and the activities.<sup>73</sup> First, the irregular warfare environment is complex and unstable. Complexity results from the many root causes of irregular conflicts, including (but not limited too) political,

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<sup>70</sup> The problems inherent to the ambiguous nature of the term “irregular warfare” is outlined in Kenneth C. Coons Jr and Glenn M. Harned, “Irregular Warfare is Warfare,” *Joint Force Quarterly : JFQ*, no. 52 (First Quarter, 2009), 97.

<sup>71</sup> Joseph E. Osborne, “Beyond Irregular Warfare: A Strategic Concept for Countering Irregular Adversaries and Engagement in Complex Security Environments,” 2009, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/mag/docs-temp/184-osborne.pdf> (accessed March 19, 2009).

<sup>72</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 1-02: Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, 282.

<sup>73</sup> Osborne, *Beyond Irregular Warfare: A Strategic Concept for Countering Irregular Adversaries and Engagement in Complex Security Environments*.



economic, social, and resource competition.<sup>74</sup> Instability results from rapidly changing conditions in conflict environments. Second, irregular warfare typically includes a diverse mix of competing state and non-state actors. Irregular warfare is fundamentally a political contest, so the diversity of actors and their associated interests adds depth to the problem. This characteristic led retired British General Rupert Smith to describe irregular warfare as “war amongst the people.”<sup>75</sup> Third, political activities dominate irregular wars (e.g., governance, provision of social services, and civil rule of law). While both military and non-military activities are required in irregular wars, military force is a supporting activity. As Rupert Smith argued, “there are no longer purely military or political situations.”<sup>76</sup> The U.S. government defines complex operations as those requiring close coordination of civil and military activities, and irregular wars meet this definition.<sup>77</sup>

The complex nature of irregular warfare produces uncertainty inside the military and other governmental entities attempting to deal with the problems of irregular warfare. Internal to the government, uncertainty has dramatic effects on organizations and can create intra-governmental political conflict.<sup>78</sup> The U.S. “will fail if waged by military means alone.”<sup>79</sup> Many of the capabilities required in irregular conflicts reside outside the armed services or are not a

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<sup>74</sup> Michael Moodie, "Conflict Trends in the 21st Century," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 53, no. 2nd Quarter (2009), 23.

<sup>75</sup> Rupert Smith, *The Utility of Force: The Art of War in the Modern World* (New York: Vintage Books, 2005), 5.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*, 377.

<sup>77</sup> Patrick Cronin and Hans Binnendijk, *Civilian Surge: Key to Complex Operations* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 2008), 6.

<sup>78</sup> Hatch and Cunliffe, *Organization Theory*, 286.

<sup>79</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept Version 1.0, September 11, 2007* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 2007), 1.

core competency for the military, such as governance, development, and reconciliation. The integration and employment of resources from multiple governmental entities is an inherently political process because resource allocation involves many competing interests. Moreover, the U.S.'s adversaries reflects just as much actor complexity as the friendly side. The U.S. expects to engage multiple competing factions, including religious, secular/political, ethnic, and tribal groups all in violent competition for power.

Not only are there many non-military actors involved in irregular wars, but the principle activities of irregular wars are political. While every conflict is unique, there are activities that together typify irregular conflict. The Department of Defense's Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept identifies the set of activities comprising irregular warfare as well as associated lines of operation.<sup>80</sup> While military force and security operations support all of the irregular warfare logical lines of operation, only two of the seven lines are military force-centric. That the U.S. military developed this politics-centric concept reinforces the primacy of non-military capabilities in irregular warfare operations, a fact that forces military commanders to seek influence or control over necessary (but non-military) capabilities.

This mix of activities and missions is ambiguous. Irregular wars are complex affairs involving many actors and activities. The product is strategic ambiguity. The U.S. military anticipates that irregular conflicts will generally be longer (more protracted) than conventional combat operations.<sup>81</sup> The long duration of these conflicts is both a factor in and a product of the complex political nature of irregular wars. These conflicts typically require persistent presence

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 9-10. Eric V. Larson et al., *Assessing Irregular Warfare: A Framework for Intelligence Analysis* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2008), 15.

<sup>81</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept Version 1.0*, September 11, 2007, 21.

and sustained effort over a much longer period to reach termination or stabilization. The U.S.'s record of involvement in small wars over the past century demonstrates the protracted nature of these conflicts. Most importantly, the U.S.'s strategy is likely to change and adapt to change in the conflict environment. Irregular wars, because they are protracted, invoke a degree of ambiguity and uncertainty from the tactical to the strategic level. One observer of the impact of irregular wars on civil-military relations argues that these conflicts exhibit "complexity in planning and execution [that is] beyond the understanding of most civilian decision makers."<sup>82</sup>

The prevalence of irregular wars today, when combined with the U.S.'s current understanding of irregular conflict has significant implications for operational commanders. First, it is clear from the literature that there is no explicitly military domain in irregular warfare. These violent struggles are highly political at all levels of war. Second, the employment of military force, traditionally the exclusive purview of the military at the operational level and below, is secondary to many of the other means required in irregular warfare. Regardless, military operational commanders have the preponderance of responsibility in conflict zones without having formal authority over the necessary non-military capabilities. Finally, irregular wars are complex affairs and tend to be protracted. The underlying roots of conflict often require long periods to produce termination. Irregular wars are mostly tactical in nature, causing a degree of ambiguity for the policy/strategy formation process. Each of these three factors (conflated lanes, primacy of non-military means, and strategic ambiguity) are significant to the nature of operational command in irregular warfare. These conditions, combined with the ambiguous relationship between the military and politics outlined earlier, are significant factors in whether

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<sup>82</sup> Vincent Davis, *Civil-Military Relations and the Not-quite Wars of the Present and Future* (Carlisle, PA: United States Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 1996), 4, <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubid=323> (accessed March 11, 2010).

operational commanders exert influence on the policy process during irregular wars. Unlike the U.S. military's conception of irregular warfare, the recognition of the blurry line between the military and politics is old.

This analysis, combined with the literature review that follows, forms the premise for this monograph. Examination of military doctrine, relevant theories of civil-military relations, and military professional ethics indicates that assuming a clear division between military operations and politics is fallacious. Further, irregular warfare dominates the current conflict environment and imposes certain demands on operational commanders. In order to conduct operations in an irregular warfare context, military operational commanders need to reduce the ambiguity of the policy or strategy then are charged with supporting while also gaining influence over the non-military resources necessary for their operations. Consequently, operational commanders have both an incentive and an opportunity to engage in policy processes because of weak barriers to military involvement in politics. Finally, operational commanders are regular actors in the policy environment rather than as professional restrained (apolitical) actors. These observations form a basis for the methodology and analysis employed in this monograph.

## The Military in Politics: A Literature Review

You show me a general in Washington who ain't political, and I will show you a guy who ain't gonna get promoted again, and probably should not be a general in the first place.

— Colin L. Powell<sup>83</sup>

The preceding section argued that the barriers between military operations and politics are low and artificial, potentially leaving room for operational commanders to influence policy in the contemporary context of irregular warfare. This literature review examines existing analysis of the relationship between the military and politics, thereby establishing the relevance of this monograph to the field of study while also contributing to this monograph's intellectual foundation. Overall, the review of civil-military relations literature reveals that in general the academic literature portrays civil-military relations as a zero-sum game for control.<sup>84</sup> There is a range or spectrum of possible relationships between the military and politics based on relative control. At one end, the military dominates civilian political processes. At the other, politics controls the military. Between these poles is an enormous gray area in which neither the military nor civilians dominate the other. In this area there is opportunity for the military to influence politics (but not control it), or conversely for politics to delve into military operations (but not completely manage military affairs). The literature reflects this spectrum of potential relationships between the military and politics, with each relationship type providing a body of literature.

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<sup>83</sup> Karen Deyoung, *Soldier: The Life of Colin Powell* (New York: Knopf, 2006), 209.

<sup>84</sup> Christopher P. Gibson and Don Snider, "Civil-Military Relations and the Potential to Influence: A Look at the National Security Decision-Making Process," *Armed Forces and Society* 25, no. 2 (1999), 194.

In states where the military controls political processes, the military dominates the state. This literature examines structural conditions that make military control more likely, such as a history of military coups, charismatic military leaders, and semi-authoritarian regimes. In his seminal work on the military and politics, Samuel E. Finer examines military domination of politics in detail and concludes that a “regime of military provenance or direct military rule is...a distinctive kind of regime.”<sup>85</sup> Finer provides a typology for military interventions in politics and provides a framework to assess the likelihood of a military intervention.<sup>86</sup> Finer makes clear that military intervention is contingent upon specific structural conditions and, consequently, there is a large body of literature dedicated to the study of military rule and coup d’état.<sup>87</sup> This literature seeks to understand and explain the phenomenon of military control, but this literature is largely inapplicable to the United States and even less germane to this monograph’s topic (military influence on policy short of military intervention). The authors are primarily concerned with transitioning states and unstable polities. Michael Desch asserts this point clearly in his definitive work on post-cold war American civil-military relations by stating that the “bottom line for developed democracies is civilian control: can civilian leaders reliably get the military to do what they [civilian leaders] want it to?”<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> Samuel E. Finer, *The Man on Horseback: The Role of the Military in Politics* (New York: Praeger, 1962), 4.

<sup>86</sup> Finer describes four kinds of military intervention, ranging from legitimate and benign activity to the military supplantment of civil government. The kinds are influence, pressure, displacement, and supplantment. *Ibid.*, 86-87.

<sup>87</sup> Works generally consist of edited books (compilations of single country studies of military intervention) or complete works dedicated to single cases. A quality example and a comprehensive reader on the subject is: Amos Perlmutter and Valerie Plave Bennett, eds., *The Political Influence of the Military: A Comparative Reader* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980).

<sup>88</sup> Michael C. Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 4.

Desch directs us to the other end of the spectrum of control and the literature focused on civilian political control of the military. This is the state of the art for American writing on civil-military relations. This literature is unconcerned with the probability of military coups d'état and instead focuses on how civilian policy makers can gain the most utility out of the military organizations they control. For example, Samuel Huntington argues for imposing an apolitical form of professionalism on the military in order to make the military a tool of the state.<sup>89</sup> Morris Janowitz argues for controlling the composition of the military, in effect arguing that control comes from having military values reflect society's values.<sup>90</sup> In a sense, Janowitz thesis complements Huntington's argument for professionalism by controlling the raw material to which apolitical norms are applied. Elliot Cohen argues for strong civilian leadership as the means to achieve optimal control over the military.<sup>91</sup>

Lastly, Peter Feaver examines the principal-agent relationship between civilian politicians and the military, establishing conditions under which the military would best conform to civilian direction.<sup>92</sup> Feaver's analysis provides the most robust theoretical perspective of any of the major theories, but still has limitations. "Agency theory treats day-to-day civil-military relations as an ongoing game of strategic interaction, in which civilian principals vary the intrusiveness of their monitoring of military agents and military agents vary their compliance with civilian preferences."<sup>93</sup> Feaver's work does rely on reduction of actor complexity (both

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<sup>89</sup> Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*.

<sup>90</sup> Morris Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier, A Social and Political Portrait* (New York: Free Press, 1960).

<sup>91</sup> Cohen, *Supreme Command*.

<sup>92</sup> Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency Oversight, and Civil-Military Relations*

<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*, 282.

military and civilians as unitary rational actors) and still relies on the assumption that civilian's promulgate policy for military implementation. The predictive power of Feaver's agency theory is inappropriate to this discussion for several reasons. First, the unitary actor model of the military fails to capture that the military consists of many actors with different strategies or interests. For example, while the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff is the President's senior military advisor, regional Combatant Commanders implement regional military strategies and their policy interests may diverge from the Chairman's preference for the armed services as a whole. Similarly, operational commanders' preferences may be distinct from either the Chairman's or the Combatant Commanders' interest. Second, agency theory cannot fully account for plural decision-making and the military's active influence on the policy they implement.<sup>94</sup>

These works have all had a profound impact on American civil-military relations, but their power is limited to explaining how to ensure civilian control. Even the best of the theorists relies on gross reductionism and all of the theorists fail to address the issue of strategic ambiguity, the condition when the civilian policymakers have no clear policy to prevail upon the military.<sup>95</sup> Indeed, scholars of American civil-military relations perceive that their task is to explain how to maintain control over the military, rather than to examine how policy is established.<sup>96</sup> Contemporary critics argue, as does this monograph, that there are circular aspects to existing

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<sup>94</sup> Naturally, there is a counterargument that when the military influences policy, the military aligns civilian preferences with their own – thus making their “compliance” easy. Feaver would describe this as non-intrusive monitoring because civilians would be confident that the military would act on their own preferences. Regardless, principal-agent does not provide a way to understand this process because it focuses on civilian implementation of control.

<sup>95</sup> Michael Kobi, "The Dilemma Behind the Classical Dilemma of Civil Military Relations: The "Discourse Space" Model and the Israeli Case during the Oslo Process," *Armed Forces and Society* 33, no. 4 (2008), 518-522.

<sup>96</sup> Burk, *Theories of Democratic Civil-Military Relations*, 7.



civil-military relations theory that render them useless for prediction.<sup>97</sup> In contrast, the subject of this monograph is civil-military relations in the absence of complete political control.

Between these two poles of control is a vast unexplored area of research in which neither the military or civilian policy makers dominate. Civil-military relations are complicated, consisting of large numbers of actors and stakeholders. These actors have many relationships that adapt over time, making civil-military relations complex. Consequently, there is no unifying theory or definitive study that explains civil-military relations as a system. Conditions of complete military or civilian political control simplify the problem of explaining civil-military relations and the literature avoids explaining more complex conditions. There is a condition when the military influences politics, but lacks control that would constitute a military state. Scholars and journalists examine this state of affairs occasionally, typically to attribute excessive political influence to particular military leaders. This criticism tends to be superficial and attribute the influence to the exceptional qualities of individuals. Examples include the perceived political power of General Colin N. Powell in the early 1990s or the influence of General MacArthur during the Korean War.<sup>98</sup> There is also a condition when the civilian politics influences military operations, but lacks the complete control necessary for optimal achievement of civilian leaders' objectives. This condition gets significantly more treatment, in part due to military members' perceptions of excessively intrusive civilian monitoring (micro-management) of the Vietnam War. There is a virtual cottage industry dedicated to the subject of direct political control of U.S.

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<sup>97</sup> Paul Bracken, "Reconsidering Civil-Military Relations," in *U.S. Civil-Military Relations: In Crisis Or Transition?*, ed. Don Snider and Miranda A. Carlton (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995), 145-146.

<sup>98</sup> See Stephen J. Cimbala, "The Role of Military Advice: Civil-Military Relations and Bush Security Strategy," in *U.S. Civil-Military Relations: In Crisis Or Transition?*, ed. Don Snider and Miranda A. Carlton (Washington, D.C.: The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1995), 88-112.

military operations.<sup>99</sup> A recent and provocative example is Lloyd Matthews's argument that civilians' "micromanaging mentalities" are inevitable and that military officers must take "modest measures" to keep political leaders in the "proper sphere."<sup>100</sup>

This monograph is not concerned with the potential for a military coup in the U.S. or with evaluating how civilian policymakers can best impose control. Instead, this monograph is concerned with the gray area in between the two poles of control, when the military influences policy and policy influences the military. As historian Dale R. Herspring notes, the "The U.S. military has become a bureaucratic interest group but it has not tried to take over the country."<sup>101</sup> In the gray area of control, there is some degree of collaboration and influence between the military and civilian policy makers on the key issues of national security, to include conduct of military operations. In order to gain insight, this review turns away from the civil-military relations literature and towards political science. Here, there is a body of literature describing how actors function in the context of governmental politics. While Samuel Huntington would consider it blasphemy to treat military officers like civilian politicians or government bureaucrats, there may be utility to including key military officers in the set of actors involved in the national security policy process.

Political scientists apply actor-specific models to the national security process in order understand how and why policies are formed. This literature operates with a set of assumptions.

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<sup>99</sup> Many authors treat this subject, notably: H. R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Johnson, McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam* (New York: Harper Collins, 1997).

<sup>100</sup> Lloyd J. Matthews, *The Political-Military Rivalry for Operational Control in U.S. Military Actions: A Soldier's Perspective* (Carlisle, PA: United States Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 1998), 26.

<sup>101</sup> Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency: Civil-Military Relations from FDR to George W. Bush*, 5.

First, national security decision-making is a plural decision-making process. The U.S. Constitution imposes a division of responsibilities on the government as well as a system of checks and balances.<sup>102</sup> The policy process addresses complex problems that are inter-disciplinary or inter-agency in nature. No one group (e.g., the military or a civilian agency) has complete primacy on a problem and must market their organization's preferred strategy while also competing for the government's finite resources. This is the essence of bureaucratic interest outlined by James Q. Wilson in his seminal work on the behavior of governmental agencies.<sup>103</sup> Second, individual actors matter. James Scott has argued that policymaking has a unique set of actors for each unique policy issue, that no one actor or governmental entity has a persistent monopoly on decision-making, and that policy formulation is a continuous process with multiple "points of entry" for actors to influence the policy.<sup>104</sup> Actors compete to influence policy and gather resources inside the government. This is not to say that governmental actors maliciously pursue individual goals, rather that policymaking is not monolithic and that actors potentially represent competing interests. In the realm of policy relevant to military operations, this is a clear departure from the assumptions of civil-military relations theory that civilian policymakers' interest always prevail.

Several authors follow this approach and describe policy as an outcome of intra-governmental competition for influence. An excellent scholarly analysis directly related to the

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<sup>102</sup> Louis Fisher provides an excellent review of the role of checks and balances between parts of the U.S. government. Louis Fisher, "Judicial Review of the War Power," *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 35, no. 3 (2005), 466-495.

<sup>103</sup> James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies do and Why they do it* (New York: Basic Books, 1989).

<sup>104</sup> James M. Scott, "Interbranch Rivalry and the Reagan Doctrine in Nicaragua," *Political Science Quarterly* 112, no. 2 (1997), 237-239.

subject of this monograph is a relatively recent article that nearly summarizes the analysis of military influence on contemporary security policy. Christopher Gibson and Don Snider suggest that military officers have exerted influence on policy in the post-Cold War era by virtue of their relative expertise. They argue expertise on complex foreign policy issues (such as warfare) confers an advantage in the political competition to influence strategy.<sup>105</sup> Gibson and Snider examined a population of military and civilian officials that influenced policy, but only included military members officially empowered by law to influence strategy.<sup>106</sup> The authors conclude that the military has “dramatically improved” its ability to influence policy because of increased institutional focus on strategic level of decision-making.<sup>107</sup> The implication is that individual actors’ expertise at a particular strategic problem increases his or her relative influence on policy related to the specific issue. Recent journalistic accounts of the current wars of the U.S. reinforce this idea. For example, journalists David Cloud and Greg Jaffe present the professional expertise and education as a decisive factor in specific general officers’ performance and policy influence in the war in Iraq.<sup>108</sup>

In the next section (methodology), this monograph presents a model for assessing military influence on policy in the context of irregular war. This method will then be used to examine whether operational commanders influence the policy process. This analysis will depart from previous methods by including operational commanders in the set of national security policy actors. Military officers at the strategic level (specifically, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the

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<sup>105</sup> Gibson and Snider, *Civil-Military Relations and the Potential to Influence: A Look at the National Security Decision-Making Process*, 196-197.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 199.

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 206.

<sup>108</sup> Greg Jaffe and David Cloud, *The Fourth Star* (New York: Crown, 2009).

regional Combatant Commanders) already have an established presence in the policy process. The Goldwater-Nichols act guarantees this presence by law. Adding operational commanders to the set of actors is both novel and consistent with Scott's notion that each policy area has a unique set of actors but this approach is novel because it analytically "unearths" them from the operational level of war, recognizing the real linkages between strategy and operations.

## Methodology

In preparing for battle I have always found that plans are useless, but planning is indispensable.

— Dwight D. Eisenhower <sup>109</sup>

This monograph examines the role of operational commanders in the policy process. In order to test the hypothesis (that under the conditions of irregular warfare, Operational commanders will seek influence on policy), this monograph applies qualitative analysis using an existing model, Graham Allison's governmental politics model. This model is a tool to assess how actors behave in policy formation. This monograph rigorously examines a case to test the hypothesis and to determine the involvement (or extent of involvement) of operational commanders in political decision-making. Addressing the research question requires first assessing an operational commander's entry into the policy process and then assessing the extent of the engagement. In this manner, this monograph will measure the validity of the hypothesis or, alternatively, disprove the hypothesis in the case that commanders defer from engaging in politics.

### The Governmental Politics Model

In *Essence of Decision*, Graham Allison presents three different models that can be used to explain how policy is formed.<sup>110</sup> In the first model, the rational actor model, the government is a unitary rational actor and policy is the result of rational choice-based decision-making. The

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<sup>109</sup> Dwight D. Eisenhower quoted in Ministry of Defence, United Kingdom, *JWP 5-00, Joint Operations Planning* (United Kingdom: Joint Doctrine and Concepts Centre, 2004), 2-12.

<sup>110</sup> Allison provides a summary of the three models in his introduction. Graham Allison and Philip Zelikow, *Essence of Decision: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1999), 1-11.

premise is that the various actors involved in policy making come together to form policy that is optimal choice for the U.S. as a whole. In the second model, policy is the product of organizational behavior. The unit of analysis is at the governmental agency level and organizational capabilities and interests explain policy (governmental action). The third model, the governmental politics model, “focuses on the politics of a government” and explains policy formation as the result of political interaction between actors, based on the actors’ preferences and the performance of the actors.<sup>111</sup> This model explains policy as the outcome of interaction between government actors by asking who the actors are, what their preferences or interests are, and how they interact.<sup>112</sup>

Allison applied all three models to the Cuban missile crisis in order to gain multiple perspectives on the causal mechanisms that produce policy. Other political scientists have repeated this method of overlaying all three models because the models complement each other in explaining how policy was formed and how policy differs from analysts’ ideal expectations. Analysts build a compelling case for how policy emerged in a specific situation. However, this monograph is interested in examining actors’ influence on policy, not the resultant policy itself. Applying the first two models is less germane to the topic because they employ the wrong unit of analysis for the research question posed here. The rational actor model assumes that the policy-making body is a unitary rational actor, an assumption that is largely irrelevant to the question of an individual actor’s interaction with the many other actors involved in policy formation. Ultimately, the rational actor model assesses the quality or character of decisions, which is not the focus here. The organizational behavior model portrays policy actors as representatives of

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<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 390.

government agencies and is used to assess the kinds of policies that actors advocate. Here the focus is on process and structure of policy formulation, irrespective of actors' policy preferences. In both cases, the first two of Allison's three models are less applicable to the question posed in this monograph. There is some risk in not applying all three models to a case, in that the combination of the three models does generate stronger conclusions because of the greater detail available for analysis.<sup>113</sup> For the research question posed here, this monograph applies Allison's governmental politics model to selected cases to examine how operational commanders acted to influence policy objectives and resource allocation.

Allison's model would predict that operational commanders participate in policy formulation by establishing "action channels" to influence policy and resource allocation according to their specific preferences, a reflection of their organization's role and their responsibilities.<sup>114</sup> This monograph will examine three questions presented by the model. First, does the actor establish "action channels" to engage in the policy process? Allison defines action channels as regularized means of taking governmental action on a specific kind of issue.<sup>115</sup> One of Allison's significant contributions is the keen observation that "where you stand is where you sit."<sup>116</sup> Actors become "players" in the policy process "occupying a position in the major channels

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<sup>113</sup> For the purpose of this research, application of the rational actor model and the organizational behavior model is largely infeasible due to the large amount of information required to establish actor and organizational preferences during decision-making. For example, Allison's application of these models to the Cuban missile crisis relied upon a significant volume of classified information that had been released long after the incident. This research focuses on recent cases, for which this rich data is not yet available. Moreover, the focus here is on the degree of interaction that actors achieve in the policy process, rather than their preferences and the outcomes (decision).

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 383.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 300.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 307.



for producing action on national security issues."<sup>117</sup> Allison argues that a unique set of actors emerge for each unique policy issue, and that actors are either involved because of their formal authority or because they “elbow” into the discourse (i.e, actors gain entry to the policy process establishing action channels because they have a stake in the issue at hand).<sup>118</sup> Ultimately, the power of an actor on an issue depends on the actor’s skill and will than to the actor’s formal authority. “There is no sure guide to predicting the proportional influence of position relative to personal factors in individual policymakers' behavior.”<sup>119</sup> However, Allison is clear that on issues involving military force, “no military action is chosen without extensive consultation with the military players.”<sup>120</sup> This ostensibly includes senior military officers with a clear stake in the decision at hand, such as operational commanders.

Second, does the actor influence policy beyond his specified authority, specifically influence on strategic objectives? Allison argues that policy is formed in the context of shared power and, consequently, that “politics is the mechanism of choice.” Policy involves decisions on complex matters involving many governmental entities and actors and engaging in the policy process frequently means affecting the purview of other actors. Allison relies on the notion of actor differentiation. In this case, this means that not all military officers involved in policy formulation share a common interest. Military officers have “interests, information, and expertise” specific to their roles. Here, the issue is whether operational commanders affect the government’s overall strategy and whether the operational commander’s interests diverge from

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 296.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 255.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid., 298.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid., 312.

the other military officers participating in the policy process (e.g., the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the regional commanders).

Third, does the actor influence resource allocation to support policy (significantly, does he affect his own available resources and those beyond his authority)? Allison argues that actors generate power through their skill and will to bargain for policy and "other players' perceptions" of their influence.<sup>121</sup> Ultimately, an actor's power is measured by influence on the result of the policy process. Here, the issue is whether an operational commander has been able to influence governmental resource allocation according to his interests. Together, these questions both employ the Allison model as well as address the role of ethics and traditions of civil-military relations.

There are some limitations to applying Allison's model. First, the governmental politics model takes a narrow view on policy making by focusing on the actors. The model ignores other on-going processes in the overall context, such as domestic politics and related international events. This constraint also applies to the role of time. Allison focuses on discrete policy issues or decision-making events, rather than the continuum of policy over a longer period. Second, there may be insufficient unclassified data to support rigorous application of Allison's model. Allison focuses on the national security policy process, much of which occurs in classified or otherwise restricted domains.

## **Case Selection**

There have been seven significant irregular conflicts involving U.S. military intervention since Goldwater Nichols was enacted (Panama, post-Gulf War, Somalia, Haiti, Balkans,

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 300.

Afghanistan, and Iraq). In each case, a finite number of strategic decisions affected the overall course of the conflict. However, these seven instances of irregular conflict offer a small number of cases for examination. Consequently, examining all of the cases may offer no significant empirical advantage to examining one or two cases in detail. In all research, selecting the number of cases to study involves a tradeoff between richness of detail and the broader applicability of the results. The preference here is to achieve sufficient detail to answer the research question, rather than to conduct an exhaust search of history.

This monograph examines the decision-making process of 2006 that produced the decision to conduct the “Surge” in Iraq. This decision is a recent and significant case of strategic decision-making in a contemporary irregular war. This decision amounted to a significant change in strategy for a war, a decision nearly equivalent in importance to decisions to initiate or terminate conflict. The Iraq war and the “Surge” decision, in particular, bears enormous significance for the United States and its armed forces. The war consumes vast resources and has long-lasting ramifications for U.S. foreign, economic, and energy policies. Most importantly, the Iraq war draws enormous attention and scrutiny. Iraq demonstrates the classic paradox wherein big powerful states struggle to win small irregular wars.<sup>122</sup> The conflict contributes greatly to the American military’s paradigm on contemporary operations and irregular warfare.

Iraq’s significance also frames the limitations of its study. First, there are drawbacks of studying recent events. There is a significant volume of information available today, but the quality and degree of analysis will most assuredly improve as the war becomes history. Second, the Iraq war is irregular warfare on an enormous scale. The costs and duration of the conflict are

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<sup>122</sup> Andrew Mack, “Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict,” *World Politics* 27, no. January (1975), 175-200.

unprecedented for a small war. Consequently, analyzing the impact of the Iraq war to divine the impact of irregular warfare may overstate the effects. Similarly, the Iraq war began with a unique set of problems. The United States attacked the Saddam Hussein regime as a preventive war and the conflict devolved into irregular warfare after the U.S. military destroyed the Iraqi state and military infrastructure. While this analysis will remain objective, some of these unique initial conditions may have profound effects that cannot be accounted for fully in analysis.

Similarly, it is analytically challenging to separate the war in Iraq from the larger global fight against terrorism and the concurrent operations in Afghanistan, the Horn of Africa, and the Philippines. For this reason, this study focuses on civil-military relations at the operational level of war. While the war in Iraq is certainly affected by strategic concerns and other ongoing operations, focusing on the operational level of war assists in analytically isolating the conflict from the broader strategic context and other operations in the U.S. effort against transnational terrorism. Moreover, the new joint operating concept for irregular warfare places the responsibility for waging irregular wars squarely in the joint force (or operational force) commander's arena.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> United States Department of Defense, *Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept Version 1.0*, September 11, 2007, 1.

## Case Study: Deciding on the “Surge” in Iraq

Lower ranking and retired officers may help shape thinking on an issue by writing and through public statements, but only in rare cases do they have direct access to policymakers.

—Steven Metz<sup>124</sup>

Do not try to do too much with your own hands.

—T. E. Lawrence<sup>125</sup>

### The Context for Decision

On February 22, 2006, Sunni insurgents destroyed the al-Askari shrine (“golden mosque”) in Samarra, Iraq, setting off a wave of sectarian violence that spread through the rest of year.<sup>126</sup> Security conditions in Iraq deteriorated rapidly. Sectarian violence between Sunni and Shia factions escalated to a level approaching civil war while the Multinational Forces Iraq under the command of General George W. Casey Jr. struggled to contain the violence in order to stabilize the fledgling Iraqi government. These conditions led policy makers to re-assess the policy for Iraq, a process that began with mosque bombing and ended with President George W. Bush’s public announcement to deploy additional military forces to Iraq (the “Surge”) in January, 2007.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>124</sup> T.E. Lawrence, quoted by Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus during his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee (regarding strategic influence over Iraqi political process). *Nomination of Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus, U.S. Army, to be General and Commander, Multinational Forces Iraq*, 110th Congress, 1st Session, 2007.

<sup>125</sup> Steven Metz, *Decisionmaking in Operation Iraqi Freedom: Removing Saddam Hussein by Force*, ed. John R. Martin (Carlisle, PA: United States Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, 2010), 49.

<sup>126</sup> Hussein D. Hassan, *Iraq: Milestones since the Ouster of Saddam Hussein (RS22598)* (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, 2007), 2.

<sup>127</sup> The Appendix provides a comprehensive timeline of the case as well as the sources of supporting data.

During this period, the policy process consisted of a variety of formal and informal activities in which decision-makers considered a wide range of options ranging from withdrawal to increasing the number of U.S. military troops in Iraq. All options were on the table and a large number of groups (and associate figures) entered the fray on the situation in Iraq. This case study examines the actors and interactions that formed the policy process to decide national strategy in order to address the primary question posed in this monograph (do operational commanders engage in the policy process in the context of irregular war).

Several authors have already attempted to explain the decision-making process in 2006. First, James Pfiffner argues that strategic decision-making under President George W. Bush was shaped by the President's preference for informal processes.<sup>128</sup> Pfiffner argues that this preference prevented full deliberation and (consequently) narrowed policy options. Among the journalistic accounts, most authors attribute the decision to "Surge" in Iraq to specific actors. In his thorough account of the "Surge," journalist Bob Woodward attributes the decision to National Security Advisor Stephen J. Hadley's strong influence over President' Bush decision-making process.<sup>129</sup> Similarly, journalists Thomas Ricks and Fred Barnes attribute the decision to a set of non-governmental policy activists led by retired General John M. Keane.<sup>130</sup> Author Steve Coll argues

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<sup>128</sup> James P. Pfiffner, "Policy-Making in the Bush White House," *Issues in Governance Studies*, no. 21 (October, 2008), [http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2008/1031\\_bush\\_pfiffner/1031\\_bush\\_pfiffner.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2008/1031_bush_pfiffner/1031_bush_pfiffner.pdf) (accessed April 22, 2010).

<sup>129</sup> Bob Woodward, *The War within: A Secret White House History 2006-2008* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2008).

<sup>130</sup> Thomas E. Ricks, *The Gamble* (New York: Penguin, 2009). Fred Barnes, *How Bush Decided on the Surge*, 2008), <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/014/658dwgrn.asp> (accessed February 24, 2010).

against idea that Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus influenced the policy.<sup>131</sup> Finally, Peter Feaver (a participant in the policy process) offers a firsthand perspective, arguing that the process was truly a collaborative interagency effort.<sup>132</sup>

Each of the possible explanations is limited to the authors' specific perspectives and examines the "Surge" decision-making in retrospect to attribute the decision to find a single individual or cause. No account takes an objective and systemic view of how the actors engaged to produce the "Surge" decision. This case study provides an objective account of the policy process by synthesizing a wide variety of primary and secondary sources, including personal accounts by key participants.<sup>133</sup> This study proceeds by examining the context of the decision, that Iraq was a case of irregular warfare and that the decision at hand focused on the mission and resources for Iraq. Then focus shifts to understanding how the "Surge" decision emerged from the interactions of various policy actors.

In 2006, American policymakers faced a situation in Iraq that clearly demonstrated the salient characteristics of irregular warfare. During the period, the situation in Iraq was complex and ambiguous. Multiple factions competed for control in Iraq including armed sectarian groups, non-sectarian groups, the Iraqi government, and coalition forces. These groups employed a

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<sup>131</sup> Steve Coll, "The General's Dilemma," *The New Yorker*, September 8, 2008, , [http://www.newamerica.net/publications/articles/2008/generals\\_dilemma\\_7865](http://www.newamerica.net/publications/articles/2008/generals_dilemma_7865) (accessed April 20, 2010).

<sup>132</sup> Peter D. Feaver, "The Right to be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge" (Paper presented at the International Studies Association Conference, New Orleans, LA, February 20, 2010), [http://www.allacademic.com/one/isa/isa10/index.php?cmd=Download+Document&key=unpublished\\_manuscript&file\\_index=2&pop\\_up=true&no\\_click\\_key=true&attachment\\_style=attachment&PHPSESSID=6785f7c2e74a9a089872f17eb074c8fa](http://www.allacademic.com/one/isa/isa10/index.php?cmd=Download+Document&key=unpublished_manuscript&file_index=2&pop_up=true&no_click_key=true&attachment_style=attachment&PHPSESSID=6785f7c2e74a9a089872f17eb074c8fa) (accessed April 15, 2010).; Peter D. Feaver, "Anatomy of the Surge," *Commentary*, April, 2008, , <http://www.commentarymagazine.com/viewarticle.cfm/anatomy-of-the-surge-11265> (accessed April 15, 2010).

<sup>133</sup> All of the relevant background for this case study has been compiled and presented in chronological form in the Appendices to this monograph. In some cases, specific sources are cited in this section where expert opinion (e.g., primary sources) has been used to verify inferences drawn from the overall study of the case.

variety of different strategies, forming a unique conflict environment with dynamic relationships between social, political, economic, and military conditions. The state of the conflict invoked a large degree of uncertainty, while also demanding a comprehensive or whole-of-government approach to integrate military and civilian efforts to stabilize Iraq.

To policymakers, the net result of the conditions in Iraq was strategic ambiguity: what should the mission be and what resources should be applied in Iraq? Over the course of 2006, these two questions (mission and troop allocation) formed the basis of the policy process. Ironically, mission and resources only constitute two of the three elements of strategy (ends, ways, and means). These three elements are not only elements of strategy, but also the three key issues or concerns for operational commanders. Over the course of the yearlong decision-making process, the “ways” required in Iraq were virtually absent from the policy discourse.<sup>134</sup> Interestingly, the “ways” were left to the leaders of the U.S. effort in Iraq and to the institutions responsible for preparing organizations to operate in Iraq. Leaving the “ways” to operating forces in Iraq is consistent with the notion of strategic decision makers establishing objectives and allocating resources while operational organizations implement strategy through their operations. In the case of 2006, an additional development affected this distribution of “ways” to operational elements: the ongoing development of counter-insurgency doctrine in the U.S. While “ways” were absent from the policy discourse, there was a separate and ongoing development inside the U.S. military to improve the organizational capacity to conduct counter-insurgency. The policy

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<sup>134</sup> This fact is perhaps best exemplified by the broad public misunderstanding on the “Surge” itself. A frequent source of confusion is that the deployment of additional troops to Iraq coincided with a shift in the military objective (from training Iraqi forces to enable withdrawal to securing the population) as well as an application of “new” counterinsurgency tactics. The military changed the “ways” unilaterally, but the new “ways” needed a commensurate change in strategic objectives and resourcing.



debate focused on the two elements of strategy involving the greatest degree of uncertainty and divergence (disagreement) among the policy makers.

## **Actors and Action Channels**

The policy process that produced the “Surge” decision did not follow the standard model of top-down strategic decision-making. The “Surge” decision emerged from a bottom-up decision-making process that developed over the entire year of 2006. Over this period, at least thirteen different groups initiated strategic review processes for the situation in Iraq (the appendix lists these groups in detail, along with the timelines of their influence of the process). The majority of these groups self-organized for the task by initiating efforts independently and without direction from an oversight authority. Inside the government, the National Security Council (NSC) staff, the State Department, and the U.S. Congress all initiated independent reviews. Outside the government, at least one influential policy review emerged that influenced the process (the Iraq planning group at the American Enterprise Institute). As time progressed, several of these groups merged or spun-off additional separate review processes. Eventually in October, President George W. Bush ordered the NSC to integrate the previously separate and informal (undirected) planning efforts that were occurring at the NSC staff, at the State Department, and elsewhere. Additionally, the Joint Chiefs of Staff initiated a review pursuant to the NSC’s interagency effort.

By the end, three “tracks” to the decision emerged. The NSC staff gathered the various executive agency reviews under the umbrella of an interagency led by National Security Advisor Stephen J. Hadley and his key deputies (notably, Jack D. Crouch and Meghan L. O’Sullivan). The military’s various planning efforts were expressed through the Joint Chiefs of Staff and through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCC, General Peter Pace) in his capacity on the principles committee of the NSC. The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) effort gained direct and repeated access to NSC principles over the period. Many of the efforts seem to have fizzled

out and have little or no effect on the endgame decision-making. Notably, Congress' Iraq Study Group (ISG) recommended against committing additional troops to Iraq, but the ISG's voice appears to have gone silent during the last month of the decision-making process. Similarly, the JCS voiced dissent over committing additional troops to Iraq, but the CJCS eventually supported the "Surge." Overall, over the eight-month process of review, the formal or official review process consisted of one month during which time the formal review process shared access with external, informal review processes.

Beneath the group level of analysis, there was continuous interaction between the individual actors in both official and unofficial groups. Individuals from the NSC staff review maintained professional relationships with members of the AEI review, the JCS review (General Pace's "council of Colonels"), and with senior military officers. AEI planners had direct access to members of the NSC (including the President, Secretary of Defense, the Vice President, and the CJCS), to members of the JCS's "council of Colonels," to senior military officers, and to the Iraq Study Group members. This informal social network was quite ordinary and a natural consequence of long standing professional relationships among national security professionals. In retrospect, the sequence of events (the process) indicates that the decision was a product of the influence and access of groups and individuals. The AEI group influenced the NSC staffers, the NSC staffers influenced the JCS, and the ISG influenced AEI. Professional relationships enabled actors to gain access to the decision-making process and gain influence through agenda setting.

### **Extraordinary Influence**

At the individual level of analysis, the case of the "Surge" decision demonstrates the extraordinary effect that personal relationships and influence have on decision-making processes. Several individuals wielded significant influence over the course or path of the decision-making process. First, the National Security Advisor on several occasions enabled non-governmental actors to access key decision-makers. These "outside interventions" occurred early in the process

and throughout the process, nearly paralleling the formal meetings of the NSC. In doing so, the National Security Advisor created an action channel for policy recommendations from outside the legally guaranteed source of input (the NSC). Second, the informal action channel created by Stephen J. Hadley enabled several actors to “elbow into” the policy process and then set conditions for a review that would favor their positions. Retired General Jack Keane (working from the AEI group through Hadley and General Pace) was able to gain direct access to NSC principles as well as place “trusted agents” in the spin-off strategic review groups. Simultaneously, General Keane consulted with other actors with a voice in the process, notably Lieutenant General Raymond T. Odierno and Lieutenant General Petraeus. General Keane, working through the National Security Advisor and the CJSC, established an action channel of actors working for a common agenda (“the Surge”). A key factor in the dominance of the informal action channel was the administration’s imperative to key the policy review out of public scrutiny, due to ongoing political campaign season. The administration deliberately avoided a comprehensive interagency review of the Iraq policy until late in the fall of 2006, thus allowing the informal channel to flourish.<sup>135</sup>

Below this level, the professional network of national security professionals functioned equally efficiently. Specifically, there was a high degree of interconnectedness among the pro-“Surge” informal actors. For example, Lieutenant General Petraeus was connected to and consulted with Meghan L. O’Sullivan (a Hadley deputy at the NSC), several members of the “council of Colonels” (notably, Peter Mansoor), members of the AEI group (General Keane), and

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<sup>135</sup> This assertion is based on the overall sequence and timing of the policy process and was confirmed by participants. Peter D. Feaver, Anonymous Electronic correspondence with author, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, May 11, 2010. Peter Mansoor, Anonymous Electronic correspondence with author, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, May 10, 2010.

eventually with Lieutenant General Odierno in Iraq. The dominant groups in the policy process (AEI and the NSC Iraq group) were highly interconnected and used their positions to create demand for a decision on the “Surge” and notably to set favorable conditions for their preferred course of action (the groups’ contesting the “Surge” competed against the “Surge,” rather than among many policy options). By controlling the agenda and ensuring access to individuals and groups favoring the “Surge,” these groups controlled the decision. This influence is precisely what Allison implied by using the name “action channels:” groups and individual use a constructed channel to take information and recommendations to a decision maker for action. By establishing the channel and controlling the recommendation, the informal process dominated the formal process in the case of the “Surge” decision.

This narrative of a decision-making process dominated by relationships and influence “beyond the chain of command” is profound because of the degree of exclusion of “official” actors in the network process. The policy process excluded several key stakeholders. For example, the Iraqi leadership was a key stakeholder, but the President did not consult the Iraqi Prime Minister until after making the “Surge” decision. Similarly, interagency planners did not integrate the JCS and other key military leaders until very late in the process. Key military stakeholders opposed the “Surge” until the Chairman of the JCS accepted the decision as inevitable.<sup>136</sup> These actors started with a positional advantage over the external/informal actors, with a guaranteed voice in any discussion on the employment of military power. However, there is no indication that these actors used the power of position to thwart a decision emerging from outside of the formal decision-making process (NSC and JCS review).

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

Towards the end of the decision-making process, there were in effect two operational commanders involved: General Casey, the outgoing commander of Multinational Forces Iraq, and his successor Lieutenant General Petraeus. These officers, from similar professional backgrounds and with similarly exceptional professional capabilities, took radically different approaches to the “Surge” decision process. The evidence available suggests that General Casey participated only in the domain of formal decision-making, arguing against the “Surge” in person and via video teleconference during principles meetings of the NSC. General Petraeus maintained relationships with other actors in the decision-making process (Secretary Gates, O’Sullivan, Lieutenant General Odierno, and COL Mansoor, among others).<sup>137</sup> Lieutenant General Petraeus consulted with and participated in the policy process through his network of actors both before and after his nomination to replace General Casey as the Commander of Multinational Forces Iraq, although in no case is it apparent that General Petraeus maneuvered to gain access or control the decision-making process. In this sense, General Casey was a primary actor in the policy process (his views were solicited formally in the NSC meetings), whereas Lieutenant General Petraeus was a tertiary actor. The fact that both actors were participants in the process is significant. Ultimately, the outcome or decision favored the “Surge” proposal that came from the civilian staff of the NSC over the concerns of the operational commander (General Casey), the USCENTCOM Commander General John Abizaid, and the near unanimous concerns of the JCS. While the precise origin of the “Surge” idea is not clear from the available evidence, it is clear that a variety of civilian and informal influences was able to trump the concerns of the military’s senior leadership regarding a military mission and the allocation of military forces.

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid.; Feaver, *Electronic Correspondence with Author*.

## Findings

There are a few key observations from the “Surge” decision-making process that are relevant to the primary research question of this monograph and support the conclusions presented in the next section. First, both General Casey and Lieutenant General Petraeus participated in the policy process to “decide” the U.S.’s new approach to the war in Iraq in 2006. These two key figures in the “Surge” decision represent different perspectives, with General Casey as the outgoing operational commander and Lieutenant General Petraeus as the successor. These two leaders took significantly different approaches approaches that these two leaders took were significantly different, with one relying on formal processes unsuccessfully and the other using informal mechanisms to gain a favorable decision. General Casey’s absence from the informal channels was a surprising finding, given the professional similarities between General Casey and Lieutenant General Petraeus.

Second, the policy process consisted of many different formal and informal actors. Lieutenant General Petraeus’ was an informal actor, having no explicit authority to be engaged in the decision. However, his influence on the process was not overt or deliberate. His influence was a consequence of pre-existing professional relationships (social capital); there is no evidence that new sources of influence were created during the process. This social network was a necessary condition for Lieutenant General Petraeus to influence the decision-making process, given that he had no access to formal mechanisms. This successful “passive” participation in the decision-making process shows that how commanders choose to interact with other members of the policy process has an important impact on their relative influence.

Third, the high degree of disagreement and the length of the decision-making process are indicative of the difficulty of strategic decision-making in irregular warfare. Questions of mission and resource allocation are difficult and highly contested in all policy processes, but even more when so much complexity and uncertainty surrounds the problem. In this case, the actors who

managed the process through agenda setting influence, and controlling action channels had more impact on the process than formally empowered actors.

## Conclusions

The problem in the modern state is not armed revolt, but in the relation of the expert to the politician.

— Samuel Huntington <sup>138</sup>

The purpose of this monograph is to assess the role of operational commanders in the policy process in the context of irregular wars. In order to address this pressing question on the nature of contemporary civil-military relations, this monograph conducted a thorough review of the relevant literature (theory and doctrine) and a detailed review of a recent case of strategic decision-making in an irregular war. The literature review produced the premise for the case study, that irregular war produces strategic ambiguity and that there are minimal constraints to operational commanders' involvement in the policy process. The uncertainty and difficulty of irregular wars give operational commanders an incentive to influence the missions and resources assigned to their operations, while the absence of constraint gives operational commander's wide latitude to influence the plural decision-making process that produces strategy.

Detailed study of the decision to “Surge” additional troops to Iraq demonstrates the validity of the premise and the hypothesis offered in this monograph. First, the ambiguity of the Iraq war led to a long process in which recommendations emerged from various groups to the central decision-making group. The situation was unclear and the interaction among the various groups ultimately had a significant impact on how the “Surge” decision was made. Second, operational commanders were deeply involved in the policy process for the “Surge” decision, although the case shows that this involvement is in no way sinister or demonstrative of “political

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<sup>138</sup> Huntington, *The Soldier and the State*, 20.



generalship.” In this case, operational commanders influenced the decision-making process because of their access. One commander relied upon formal authorities and official “action channels” to provide professional military counsel on the military mission and the resources required, while another relied upon a network of connections to influence the process. Regardless, these actors (General Casey and Lieutenant General Petraeus) did not exploit the situation to gain more power over the policy process or the decision: they acted based on “pre-existing conditions.” The actors’ relative roles and authorities were sufficient to give them influence over the process, no additional action was necessary. Interestingly, neither leader engaged in overt or public influence over the policy process, such as using his credibility or expertise to shape public opinion on the matter. This last observation indicates that the thin line between the military and politics is past the area of consultation with policymakers, but inside the area of advocacy for policy in the broad public domain.

The implication of this study primarily relates to the prospect of future irregular wars. This study indicates that irregular wars produce uncertainty and that under such conditions operational commanders are likely to be engaged in the policy process. In future irregular wars the military’s operational commanders will be involved in the policy process, potentially creating a new “norm” for American civil-military relations. By examining policy formation as a process driven by the interaction of policy relevant actors, this research rejects the traditional notion that military commander’s will refrain from participating in political processes such as establishing objectives and allocating national resources for wars. The policy process is a gray area, where practical (naively “apolitical”) military concerns mingle with governmental politics.

Most importantly, if engaging in the gray area of policy becomes a normal function for operational commanders, then military leaders must be prepared for the unique requirements of negotiating the policy arena. Specifically, military leaders will require specific knowledge about interagency processes and possess intimate familiarity with the unique set of actors that coalesce to produce national military policy. Military leaders should anticipate this requirement and

develop the skills and network of professional associates (social capital) commensurate to the task. Leadership and management experts frequently identify this capacity to extend influence beyond formal authority as a necessary skill under conditions of social complexity.<sup>139</sup> Influence through informal channels proved significant in the case of the Iraq “Surge,” and the capacity to influence is a skill that can be developed.

There are significant limitations to these conclusions. This monograph relies on a single case study from a particularly contentious period in (what was then) an unpopular war. This method fits the constrained scope of this monograph, but full validation of the conclusions requires additional case studies. For example, the United States Army War College’s Strategic Studies Institute is currently producing a research monograph series on key decisions of the Iraq war. This series provides a suitable large set of cases to evaluate the claim that operational commanders engage in the policy process. Additionally, this monograph focuses on showing that operational commanders did influence a particular policy process. Further study could expand this idea and examine the extent of influence on decisions, rather than just influence on the process. The current research is limited to establishing that operational commanders’ influence is a necessary condition of policy formulation in irregular wars, but ignores where the influence was sufficient to affect decisions (outcomes).

Beyond the research and conclusions presented here, there are several areas for additional research. First, future study could examine additional cases of operational commanders engaging in policy formulation. Not only would additional cases contribute to understanding why this occurs, but also further study would assist in examining the extent of influence and the causes for

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<sup>139</sup> John P. Kotter, *Power and Influence: Beyond Formal Authority* (New York: The Free Press, 1985).; Ronald A. Heifetz, *Leadership without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press, 1994).

successful or failed influence on policy. Second, additional research could examine national decision-making more generally to identify opportunities or ways to engage operational leaders without politicizing the military. Operational commanders face a dilemma between the public expectation of apolitical military leadership and the reality of the military's role as a policy actor. Additional study could examine how decision-making procedures could be modified to enable the input of operational commanders while alleviating civil-military tensions. Finally, additional study could examine how to best prepare military leaders to perform at the policy level. If operating in the policy arena requires a unique skill set, then military leaders can be educated and given the necessary experiences to prepare for this role.

## Appendices

### Appendix A: Timeline for the “Surge” Decision<sup>140</sup>

**February 22, 2006:** Sunni insurgent successfully attack the al Askari Shrine (Golden Mosque) in Samarra, Iraq. The bombing sparked reprisals against Sunnis in Iraq and increased fears of a civil war.<sup>141</sup> The attack was a proximate cause for the review of U.S. policy for the Iraq war, although significant U.S. domestic debate regarding the Iraq strategy occurred from the fall of 2005 until late spring 2006.<sup>142</sup>

**March 15, 2006:** The United States Congress initiates the Iraq Study group to assess U.S. strategy for the war in Iraq.<sup>143</sup>

**March – June 2006:** Various groups begin to review the U.S.’s options for Iraq. The policy reviews are informal and occur at several levels inside the government. First, civilian policy advisors from within President George W. Bush’s administration (the National Security Council staff) began an *informal* review (not directed by senior administration officials) that

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<sup>140</sup> This table of events represents a synthesis of events and actions reported in a wide variety of sources. The sequence of events is not exhaustive, but does include all of the events relevant to understand actor interaction during the policy process of 2006 that produced the decision to increase troop levels in Iraq. In reconstructing events and actions that constituted the policy process, this research considered as many sources as were feasible. There were very few discrepancies between the various scholarly and journalistic sources used on the sequence of events or actors actions. Differences between sources were primarily a result of narrow perspective (focusing on one individual’s actions and omitting the actions of others), rather than factual difference. This timeline represents a synthesis of many sources by integrating the various sequences of events presented by different authors, thus the most complete picture of the process that is possible given the constraints of time and working in the open source domain.

<sup>141</sup> Hassan, *Iraq: Milestones since the Ouster of Saddam Hussein (RS22598)*, 2.

<sup>142</sup> This context is analyzed at length by several authors, notably in the firsthand account by a participant in the White House’s policy process: Feaver, *Anatomy of the Surge*.

<sup>143</sup> "Iraq Study Group Fact Sheet," Iraq Study Group, United States Institute of Peace, <http://www.usip.org/iraq-study-group/isg-fact-sheet> (accessed March 21, 2010).

ultimately led to the June 2006 meeting at Camp David.<sup>144</sup> President Bush did not authorize an official/formal review until October 17, 2006.<sup>145</sup> Second, U.S. Central Command initiated a theater strategic review, and the command in Iraq conducted an operational level review. Third, Multinational Force Iraq conducts nearly continuous formal assessments.<sup>146</sup> Fourth, policy analysts at the Department of State began an informal review that culminated in June with a specific policy recommendation on increase the resource allocation for Iraq.<sup>147</sup> This last effort was eventually integrated into National Security Council planning efforts (see below, October).

**May 29, 2006:** The American Enterprise Institute forms an “Iraq Planning Group” led by scholar Frederick W. Kagan. This group reaches out to a variety of influential scholars and members of the government to influence policy in order to develop an alternative military plan. This unofficial group publicly advocates for a change in strategy towards counter-insurgency with an increase in troops.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Feaver, *The Right to be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge*, 22.

<sup>145</sup> This fact is based on observation that no formal meeting of the National Security Council took place to review the policy until the October-December timeframe, but is also asserted in an account of the process by scholar (and at the time administration staffer) Peter D. Feaver.

<sup>146</sup> Multinational Force Iraq conducted daily public briefings with assessments, available archived on the organization website.

<sup>147</sup> Michael R. Gordon, "Troop "Surge" in Iraq Took Place Amid Doubt and Intense Debate," *The New York Times*, August 31, 2008, <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C0CE4DD103BF932A0575BC0A96E9C8B63&sec=&sp on=&pagewanted=2> (accessed April 15, 2010).

<sup>148</sup> The American Enterprise Institute (AEI) began to form an informal group led by Frederick Kagan as early as May, 2006, after which Kagan first publicly advocated for a troop increase in Iraq. Frederick W. Kagan, "A Plan for Victory in Iraq," *The Weekly Standard*, May 29, 2006, , <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/012/241kdhyv.asp> (accessed April 14, 2009).. Keane's cooperation identified by multiple sources, ultimately expressed in the AEI report concluding the work of the “Iraq Planning Group.” Frederick W. Kagan, *Choosing Victory: A Plan for Success in Iraq* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 2007), 47, [http://www.aei.org/docLib/20070105\\_ChoosingVictoryFINALcc.pdf](http://www.aei.org/docLib/20070105_ChoosingVictoryFINALcc.pdf) (accessed April 14, 2010).

**May - June 2006:** Iraq war assessments indicate that the U.S.'s strategy was failing and that Iraq was on the verge of civil war (combined sectarian and ethnic conflict).<sup>149</sup>

**June 12, 2006:** A panel of civilian experts briefs President George W. Bush at Camp David, Maryland, on the range of strategic options in Iraq. Options include maintaining the status quo, reducing troop levels, and increasing troop levels. The panel included non-governmental scholars with ties to government including Michael G. Vickers (Center for Strategic and Budgetary Analysis), Elliot A. Cohen (Johns Hopkins University), Robert D. Kaplan (author), Frederick W. Kagan (American Enterprise Institute).<sup>150</sup> President Bush makes no decision, preferring to give the current strategy more time under General George M. Casey (Commander, Multinational Forces Iraq).<sup>151</sup>

**August 17, 2006:** President George W. Bush conducts a video teleconference with General George M. Casey from Multinational Forces Iraq. General Casey recommends continued gradual withdrawal of forces, despite deteriorating security conditions in Iraq.<sup>152</sup>

**September 19, 2006:** General John M. Keane makes a recommendation for an increase in troop levels in Iraq to the Secretary of Defense (Donald Rumsfeld) and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (General Peter Pace). Rumsfeld and Pace are "unconvinced."<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>149</sup> Barnes, *How Bush Decided on the Surge*.

<sup>150</sup> Ron Hutcheson, "Bush Asks His Critics for Ideas on Iraq," *The Boston Globe*, June 13, 2006, [http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2006/06/13/bush\\_asks\\_his\\_critics\\_for\\_ideas\\_on\\_iraq/](http://www.boston.com/news/nation/washington/articles/2006/06/13/bush_asks_his_critics_for_ideas_on_iraq/) (accessed April 14, 2010). Barnes, *How Bush Decided on the Surge*.

<sup>151</sup> Feaver, *The Right to be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge*, 23; Ricks, *The Gamble*, 44.

<sup>152</sup> Gordon, *Troop "Surge" in Iraq Took Place Amid Doubt and Intense Debate*.

<sup>153</sup> "PBS Frontline Interviews with General Keane," PBS, <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/endgame/interviews/keane.html> (accessed April 14, 2010). Barnes, *How Bush Decided on the Surge*.

**September 27-28, 2006:** General Peter Pace (Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff) forms a “council of Colonels” to conduct an independent review of the Iraq war strategy for the Joint Chiefs of Staff, reporting directly to General Peter Pace.<sup>154</sup> The “council” met continuously for over two months, eventually providing a set of recommendations for General Pace in preparation for meetings with President Bush. On the basis of a personal interview, one source reports that Lieutenant General Petraeus met personally with the “council” regarding the importance of providing additional troops in Iraq.<sup>155</sup>

**October 11, 2006:** National Security Advisor Stephen J. Hadley directs one of his deputies (William J. Luti) to prepare a “concept for a new direction in Iraq.”<sup>156</sup>

**October 11, 2006:** National Security Advisor Stephen J. Hadley provides a copy of an informal NSC Iraq review (recommending a “surge” of forces to Iraq) to General Peter Pace, for the purpose of informing the efforts of the “council of Colonels.”<sup>157</sup>

**October 17, 2006:** At the direction of National Security Advisor Stephen J. Hadley, staffers at the National Security council begin an independent review of the Iraq policy. This group’s work was unofficial and not coordinated with the Joint Chiefs of Staff or Multinational Forces Iraq.<sup>158</sup> Initially, the group included Meghan L. O’Sullivan, Jack D. Crouch, Peter D. Feaver, and (from the State Department) David M. Satterfield.

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<sup>154</sup> Woodward, *The War within: A Secret White House History 2006-2008*, 158-159.

<sup>155</sup> Coll, *The General's Dilemma*.

<sup>156</sup> Woodward, *The War within: A Secret White House History 2006-2008*, 161.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 171.

<sup>158</sup> There are different reports on when this informal process began. Bob Woodward reported the group forming in October. Peter Feaver, one of the group members, recalls the group forming as early as September. Regardless, the group was not officially connected with any of the other ongoing review

**October 27, 2006:** General Peter Pace's "council of Colonels" meets and recommends an increase in troop levels in Iraq.<sup>159</sup>

**November 2006:** General John Keane begins cooperative work with the American Enterprise Institute's "Iraq Planning Group" in preparation for a proposal to President Bush.<sup>160</sup>

**November 5, 2006:** President George W. Bush meets with Dr. Robert M. Gates in Crawford, Texas, regarding possible appointment as Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.<sup>161</sup> Dr. Gates indicated to President Bush that he favors an increase in troops for Iraq, informed by his service on the Iraq Study Group. President Bush had already been briefed on a "Surge" plan prepared by white house aides with "advice from a loosely knit group of retired and active duty Army officers and civilian experts."<sup>162</sup>

**November 6, 2006:** The Secretary of Defense, Donald H. Rumsfeld issues a policy memorandum arguing for change in strategy in Iraq.<sup>163</sup>

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processes until after October 17. As recalled by Feaver, at no time was the group ever connected directly to coordinate policy formulation with the commanders in Iraq. Feaver, *The Right to be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge*, 23 Woodward, *The War within: A Secret White House History 2006-2008*, 177-179.

<sup>159</sup> Ricks, *The Gamble*, 103.

<sup>160</sup> *PBS Frontline Interviews with General Keane*.

<sup>161</sup> Sheryl Gay Stolberg and Jim Rutenberg, "Rumsfeld Resigns; Bush Vows to 'Find Common Ground'," *The New York Times*, November 9, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/09/us/politics/09elect.html?sq=gatescrawford&st=nyt&scp=1&pagewanted=all> (accessed April 8, 2010).

<sup>162</sup> Barnes, *How Bush Decided on the Surge*.

<sup>163</sup> Anonymous, "Rumsfeld's Memo of Options for Iraq War," *The New York Times*, December 3, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/03/world/middleeast/03mtext.html> (accessed April 8, 2010).; "Monday, December 11 - CNN.Com News Wire," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2006/WORLD/europe/12/11/monday/index.html> (accessed April 8, 2010).; Michael R. Gordon and David S. Cloud, "Rumsfeld Memo Proposed 'Major Adjustment' in Iraq," *The New York Times*, December 3, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/03/world/middleeast/03military.html?pagewanted=1> (accessed April 8, 2010).



**November 7, 2006:** The U.S. holds a general election.

**November 8, 2006:** Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld resigns.<sup>164</sup>

**November 10, 2006:** President George W. Bush orders a formal interagency review of the Iraq war strategy, to be led by Deputy National Security Advisor Jack D. Crouch and to be complete by 26 November, 2006.<sup>165</sup> The National Security Advisor forms two official policy review groups, one to develop strategic options (including “the Surge”) and one to evaluate resourcing. The options group includes members from across the government, thereby merging previously disconnected and unofficial/informal groups into a formal instrument for decision.<sup>166</sup>

**November 15, 2006:** General John P. Abizaid, Commander of United States Central Command, testifies before a Senate hearing and recommends against committing additional troops in Iraq. "I do not believe that more American troops right now is the solution to the problem. I believe that the troop levels need to stay where they are."<sup>167</sup>

**November 15 – December 13, 2006:** The National Security Council staff conducts an interagency review of the Iraq war policy at the direction of National Security Advisor Stephen J. Hadley.<sup>168</sup> The review group includes the members of the previously unofficial NSC staff review group (Jack D. Crouch, Meghan L. O’Sullivan, and William J. Luti). State Department participants include members of their Iraq review team (Philip D. Zelikow, David M. Satterfield).

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<sup>164</sup> Stolberg and Rutenburg, *Rumsfeld Resigns; Bush Vows to 'Find Common Ground'*.

<sup>165</sup> Woodward, *The War within: A Secret White House History 2006-2008*, 207.

<sup>166</sup> Feaver, *The Right to be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge*, 25.

<sup>167</sup> Peter Baker, "President Confronts Dissent on Troop Levels," *The Washington Post*, December 21, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/20/AR2006122000308.html> (accessed April 8, 2010).

<sup>168</sup> Barnes, *How Bush Decided on the Surge* and Feaver, *The Right to be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge*, 25-29.

The Department of Defense provides Undersecretary Stephen A. Cambone. The Joint Chiefs of Staff provides the Director of Operations (J-3, Lieutenant General Douglas E. Lute) and the Director of Strategic Plans and Policy (J-5, Lieutenant General John F. Sattler). The Director of National Intelligence sends David Gordon.<sup>169</sup>

**November 19, 2006:** Washington Post reporter Thomas E. Ricks reports publicly that a “council of Colonels” (group of select advisors) for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (General Peter Pace) had concluded a review of the Iraq war policy and would recommend a short-term troop increase in Iraq. Notably, several members of the “council of Colonels” had significant professional relationships with other actors in the policy process.<sup>170</sup> First, Colonel Peter R. Mansoor (future executive officer for General David H. Petraeus in Iraq during the “Surge”) serves on the group on the recommendation of General Petraeus. COL Mansoor was (later) an advocate for the “Surge” to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Second, Colonel H.R. McMasters serves on the group. COL McMasters relates to the American Enterprise Institute’s Iraq Planning Group through scholar Frederick Kagan, a longtime associate of McMasters who helped edit

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<sup>169</sup> Woodward, *The War within: A Secret White House History 2006-2008*, 230.

<sup>170</sup> At the time, Colonel Mansoor served as the Director of the U.S. Army’s Counterinsurgency Center, an organization involved in the development of the revised counterinsurgency doctrine and report to Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus’ Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Thomas E. Ricks, “Pentagon may Suggest Short-Term Buildup Leading to Iraq Exit,” *The Washington Post*, November 20, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/19/AR2006111901249.html> (accessed April 14, 2010). Woodward, *The War within: A Secret White House History 2006-2008*, 152-153.

McMasters' doctoral dissertation.<sup>171</sup> General John Keane, also an AEI associate, recommended COL McMasters for the post to General Pace.<sup>172</sup>

**November 26, 2006:** National Security Advisor Stephen J. Hadley presents the results of the NSC Iraq strategy review and recommends the "Surge."<sup>173</sup>

**November 27, 2006:** General Peter Pace meets with the Joint Chiefs and the "council of Colonels," concluding that President's decision to conduct the "Surge" was inevitable.<sup>174</sup>

**November 29, 2006:** The New York Times publishes a leaked memorandum, in which National Security Advisor Stephen J. Hadley advocates for a increase in troop levels in Iraq and urges President George W. Bush to order the Joint Chiefs of Staff and General George M. Casey Jr. to review the Iraq war policy.<sup>175</sup>

**December 6, 2006:** The Iraq Study Group releases its report recommending against committing additional U.S. troops to Iraq.<sup>176</sup>

**December 11, 2006:** President George W. Bush meets with an unofficial group advocating for an increase in troops in Iraq, a challenge or rejection of the recommendations made by the Iraq Study Group.<sup>177</sup> The group of advisors consisted of retired military officers and civilian national security policy experts from outside the government, including General John M.

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<sup>171</sup> McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty: Johnson, McNamara, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Lies that Led to Vietnam*, xviii

<sup>172</sup> Woodward, *The War within: A Secret White House History 2006-2008*, 145.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., 245.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid., 249.

<sup>175</sup> Anonymous, "Text of U.S. Security Adviser's Iraq Memo," *The New York Times*, November 29, 2006, [http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/29/world/middleeast/29mtext.html?\\_r=1&sq=hadley&st...](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/11/29/world/middleeast/29mtext.html?_r=1&sq=hadley&st...) (accessed April 8, 2010).

<sup>176</sup> *Iraq Study Group Fact Sheet*.

<sup>177</sup> *Monday, December 11 - CNN.Com News Wire*.

Keane, General Barry R. McCaffrey, General Wayne A. Downing, Elliot A. Cohen, and Frederick W. Kagan. General Keane “relays” an assessment from Lieutenant General Raymond T. Odierno (Commander, Multinational Corps Iraq) that additional forces are required.<sup>178</sup> Following the meeting, the advisors also meet separately with Vice President Richard B. Cheney.<sup>179</sup>

**December 12, 2006:** Lieutenant General Peter W. Chiarelli, Commander of Multinational Corps Iraq, recommends against committing additional troops to Iraq.<sup>180</sup>

**December 13, 2006:** President George W. Bush meets with the Joint Chiefs of Staff as part of a review of Iraq war policy.<sup>181</sup> The meeting primarily concerned the allocation of military resources to Iraq, because this was the primarily point of contention between the President, his support staff at the National Security Council, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff.<sup>182</sup> The Joint Chiefs advocated for a policy change consistent with expected Iraq Study Group recommendation, including a shift to more training and advising of Iraqi troops and gradual reduction of troop levels in Iraq. President George W. Bush urges the Joint Chiefs of Staff to consider an increase in

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<sup>178</sup> Gordon, *Troop "Surge" in Iraq Took Place Amid Doubt and Intense Debate*.

<sup>179</sup> Michael A. Fletcher and Thomas E. Ricks, "Experts Advise Bush Not to Reduce Troops," *The Washington Post*, December 12, 2006, [http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/11/AR2006121100508\\_pf.html](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/11/AR2006121100508_pf.html) (accessed April 8, 2010).; Kimberley Kagan offers a similar account of this meeting, supported by the fact that she assisted General Keane in preparation of the “Surge” recommendation through the American Enterprise Institute. Kimberly Kagan, *The Surge: A Military History* (Encounter Books, 2009), 28, 215.

<sup>180</sup> John F. Burns, "U.S. General Says Jobs and Services may Curb Iraq Violence," *The New York Times*, December 13, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/13/world/middleeast/13general.html?sq=petraeus> (accessed April 8, 2010).

<sup>181</sup> Robin Wright and Ann Scott Tyson, "Joint Chiefs Advise Change in War Strategy," *The Washington Post*, December 14, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/13/AR2006121301379.html> (accessed April 8, 2010).

<sup>182</sup> Feaver, *The Right to be Right: Civil-Military Relations and the Surge*, 27.

troop levels, a strategy similar to the concept offered on December 11, 2006, by the group of unofficial advisors.<sup>183</sup> President Bush request more detailed cost estimates from the Office of Management and Budget and a specific list of affected military units from the Joint Chiefs of Staff.<sup>184</sup>

**December 14, 2006:** The American Enterprise Institute in Washington, D.C., hosts General John M. Keane and Frederick A. Kagan who present an alternative strategy for Iraq (“A New Way Forward”). The strategy includes a temporary increase in troop levels in Iraq.<sup>185</sup> In Iraq, Lieutenant General Raymond T. Odierno replaces Lieutenant General Peter W. Chiarelli as commander of Multinational Corps Iraq. Lieutenant General Petraeus, who had previously been consulting with General Odierno regarding strategy in Iraq, is asked by General Casey to refrain from direct dialogue with General Odierno.<sup>186</sup>

**December 18, 2006:** The U.S. Army released a new counter-insurgency field manual, the culmination of an effort led Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus, Commander of the U.S. Army Combined Arms Center.<sup>187</sup>

**December 18, 2006:** Dr. Robert M. Gates sworn in as Secretary of Defense.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>183</sup> Barnes indicates that in the fall of 2006, Bush national security advisors asked the Pentagon for an overview of what a "surge" strategy in Iraq would look like. Barnes, *How Bush Decided on the Surge*.

<sup>184</sup> David E. Sanger and Michael R. Gordon, "Options Weighed for Surge in G.I.'s to Stabilize Iraq," *The New York Times*, December 16, 2006, [http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/16/world/middleeast/16military.html?pagewanted=1&\\_r=1](http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/16/world/middleeast/16military.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1) (accessed April 14, 2010).

<sup>185</sup> Frederick W. Kagan, "Choosing Victory: A Plan for Success in Iraq," American Enterprise Institute, <http://www.aei.org/event/1442#doc> (accessed April 14, 2010).

<sup>186</sup> Ricks, *The Gamble*, 112.

<sup>187</sup> Jim Garamone, "Army, Marines Release New Counterinsurgency Manual," *Armed Forces Press Service*, December 18, 2006, <http://www.defense.gov/News/NewsArticle.aspx?id=2453> (accessed April 14, 2010).

**December 18, 2006:** Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates consults Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus on the number of additional troops required in Iraq.<sup>189</sup>

**December 20, 2006:** General John P. Abizaid, Commander of U.S. Central Command, announces plan to retire.<sup>190</sup> General Abizaid did not support commitment of additional military resources to Iraq.<sup>191</sup>

**December 21, 2006:** Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates visits General George W. Casey Jr. in Iraq. General Casey changes his position incrementally in favor of a modest increase of troop levels (one or two Brigade Combat Teams).<sup>192</sup>

**December 23, 2006:** Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates meets with President George W. Bush at Camp David, reporting that General George W. Casey Jr. and Lieutenant General Ray T. Odierno endorsed the “Surge” option during Secretary Gates’ Iraq visit.<sup>193</sup>

**December 28, 2006:** President George W. Bush meets top advisors in Crawford, TX, to make a decision about the Iraq Strategy.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>188</sup> Office of the Press Secretary, "President Bush Attends Swearing-in Ceremony for Secretary of Defense Robert Gates," *The White House*, December 18, 2006, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2006/12/20061218-7.html> (accessed April 8, 2010).

<sup>189</sup> Woodward, *The War within: A Secret White House History 2006-2008*, 293, 301.

<sup>190</sup> Peter Spiegel, "Top General in Mideast to Retire," *The Los Angeles Times*, December 20, 2006, <http://articles.latimes.com/2006/dec/20/nation/na-generals20> (accessed April 14, 2010).

<sup>191</sup> Thom Shanker, "General Opposes Adding to U.S. Forces in Iraq, Emphasizing International Solutions for Region," *The New York Times*, December 20, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/20/world/middleeast/20abizaid.html?scp=8&sq=&st=nyt> (accessed April 14, 2010).

<sup>192</sup> Barnes, *How Bush Decided on the Surge*.

<sup>193</sup> "Bush Meets with Gates on Iraq Strategy," MSNBC.com, <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16340071/> (accessed April 14, 2010). and Thomas E. Ricks and Peter Baker, "Gates Gives Bush Evaluation of Iraq War," *The Washington Post*, December 23, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/23/AR2006122300297.html> (accessed April 14, 2010).

**December 30, 2006.** President George W. Bush meets with Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki and gains concurrence on deploying additional forces into Iraq to secure Baghdad.<sup>195</sup>

**January 2, 2007:** Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates offers command of Multinational Forces Iraq to Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus. Lieutenant General Petraeus consults Lieutenant General Raymond T. Odierno on the number of additional brigades required in Iraq and agrees upon five brigades.<sup>196</sup>

**January 5, 2007:** Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates announces changes to key military leaders responsible for the war in Iraq. Admiral William J. Fallon replaces General John P. Abizaid as Commander, U.S. Central Command. Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus replaces General George W. Casey Jr. as commander of U.S. forces in Iraq.<sup>197</sup>

**January 6, 2007:** Vice President Richard B. Cheney visits Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus at Fort Leavenworth. General Petraeus privately vocalizes support for the increase in troop levels in Iraq and secures the Vice President's support for his role as the next operational commander for the Iraq war.<sup>198</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> David S. Cloud and Jeff Zeleny, "Bush Considers Up to 20,000 More Troops for Iraq," *The New York Times*, December 28, 2006, <http://www.nytimes.com/2006/12/29/world/middleeast/29prexy.html> (accessed April 14, 2010).

<sup>195</sup> Ann Scott Tyson and Michael Abramowitz, "Bush, Maliki Meet After First Talks Cancelled," *The Washington Post*, November 30, 2006, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/11/29/AR2006112900324.html> (accessed April 20, 2010). Woodward, *The War within: A Secret White House History 2006-2008*, 256.

<sup>196</sup> Ibid., 309.

<sup>197</sup> "Friday, January 5 - CNN.Com News Wire," CNN, <http://www.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/europe/01/05/friday/index.html> (accessed April 14, 2010).

<sup>198</sup> Barnes, *How Bush Decided on the Surge*.

**January 10, 2007:** President George W. Bush announces deployment of 21,500 additional troops to Iraq and an overall change in strategy.<sup>199</sup> General John F. Keane acknowledges having met with President Bush on several occasions to advocate for the strategy.<sup>200</sup> Prior to the announcement, President' Bush' spokesman asserts that the "surge" plan has the support of Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus, the nominee to replace General George S. Casey as commander of forces in Iraq.<sup>201</sup>

**January 23, 2007:** Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus testifies before the United State Senate Armed Services Committee in a hearing for his nomination to command U.S. forces in Iraq.<sup>202</sup>

**January 26, 2007:** The United State Senate confirms Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus' nomination for promotion to General and command of all U.S. forces in Iraq by a vote of 81-0.<sup>203</sup>

**February 10, 2007:** General George W. Casey Jr. relinquishes command of the Multi-National Force Iraq (MNF-I) to General David H. Petraeus.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>199</sup> Hassan, *Iraq: Milestones since the Ouster of Saddam Hussein* (RS22598), 1.

<sup>200</sup> David Kerley, "The General Architect of the President's New Iraq Strategy," *Abcnews.Com*, January 10, 2007, <http://abcnews.go.com/Politics/story?id=2784096&page=1> (accessed April 8, 2010).

<sup>201</sup> Office of the Press Secretary, "Background Briefing by Senior Administration Officials," *The White House*, January 10, 2007, <http://georgewbush-whitehouse.archives.gov/news/releases/2007/01/20070110-1.html> (accessed April 15, 2010).

<sup>202</sup> SENATE ARMED SERVICES COMMITTEE, *Nomination of Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus, U.S. Army, to be General and Commander, Multinational Forces Iraq*.

<sup>203</sup> Hassan, *Iraq: Milestones since the Ouster of Saddam Hussein* (RS22598), 1.

<sup>204</sup> Sara Wood, "Petraeus Takes Command of Multinational Force Iraq," *Armed Forces Press Service*, February 12, 2007, <http://www.defense.gov/news/NewsArticle.aspx?ID=3032> (accessed April 14, 2010).



## Appendix B: Groups and Actors Related to the “Surge” Decision<sup>205</sup>

Group	Key Actors	Positions (For or Against the “Surge”)
National Security Council	President George W. Bush	For
	Vice President Richard B. Cheney	For
	National Security Advisor Stephen J. Hadley	For
	Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld	Mixed
	<i>Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates</i>	For
	Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Peter Pace	Mixed/For
	Director of National Intelligence John D. Negroponte	Unknown
	Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice	Mixed
	Jack D. Crouch	For
NSC Iraq Plans Group	Meghan L. O'Sullivan	For
	Peter D. Feaver	For
	William J. Luti	For
	General Peter Pace	Mixed/For
Joint Chiefs of Staff	General Peter Schoomaker	Against
	Lieutenant General Douglas E. Lute, J-3	Against
	Lieutenant General John F. Sattler, J-5	Against
	Colonel Peter R. Mansoor	For
Council of Colonels	Colonel H.R. McMaster	For
	Unknown	Unknown
Pentagon Iraq Plans Group	David M. Satterfield	For
U.S. State Department Iraq Plans Group	General John M. Keane	For
American Enterprise Institute “Iraq Planning Group”	Frederick W. Kagan	For
	Lee H. Hamilton	Unknown
The Iraq Study Group	James H. Baker	Unknown
	Charles S. Robb	For
	William J. Perry	Mixed/Against
	Leon E. Panetta	Unknown
	Robert M. Gates (replaced Lawrence S.	For (as Secretary of

<sup>205</sup> This is not a definitive or complete listing of the groups and actors in the government, but rather a listing of the actors relevant to the “Surge” decision. This actor set is drawn from the timeline constructed in the appendix.

	Eagleburger)	Defense)
	Rudolph Guliani (replaced by Edwin Meese III)	Unknown
	Alan K. Simpson	Unknown
U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) and Multinational Forces Iraq	General John P. Abizaid	Against
	General George W. Casey	Against
	Lieutenant General Peter W. Chiarelli	Against
	Lieutenant General David H. Petraeus	For
	Lieutenant General Raymond T. Odierno	For
Policy-Interested Public	Various, Unspecified	N/A
Policy-Interested Legislators	Various, Unspecified	N/A
The Iraqi Government	Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki	For

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